



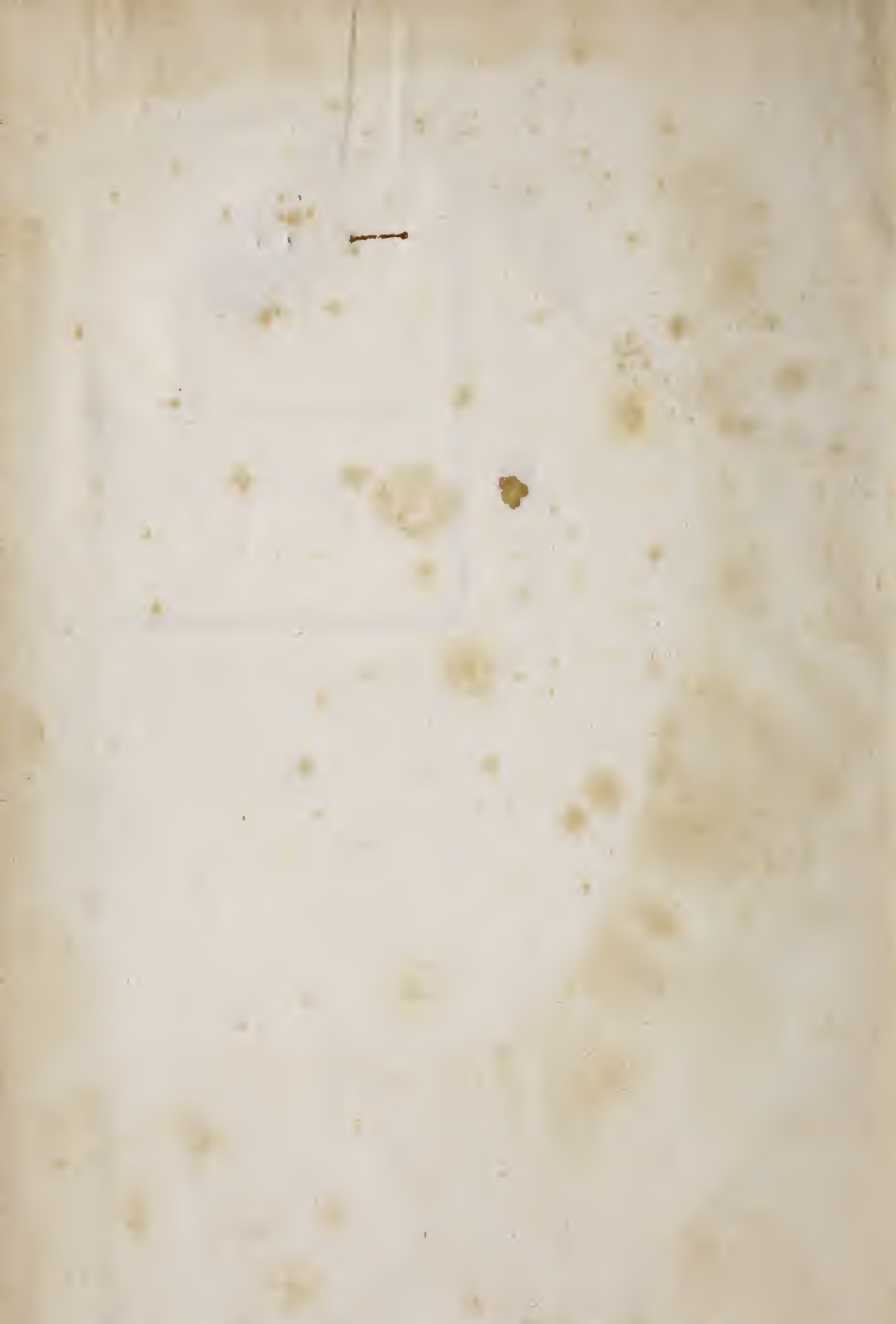
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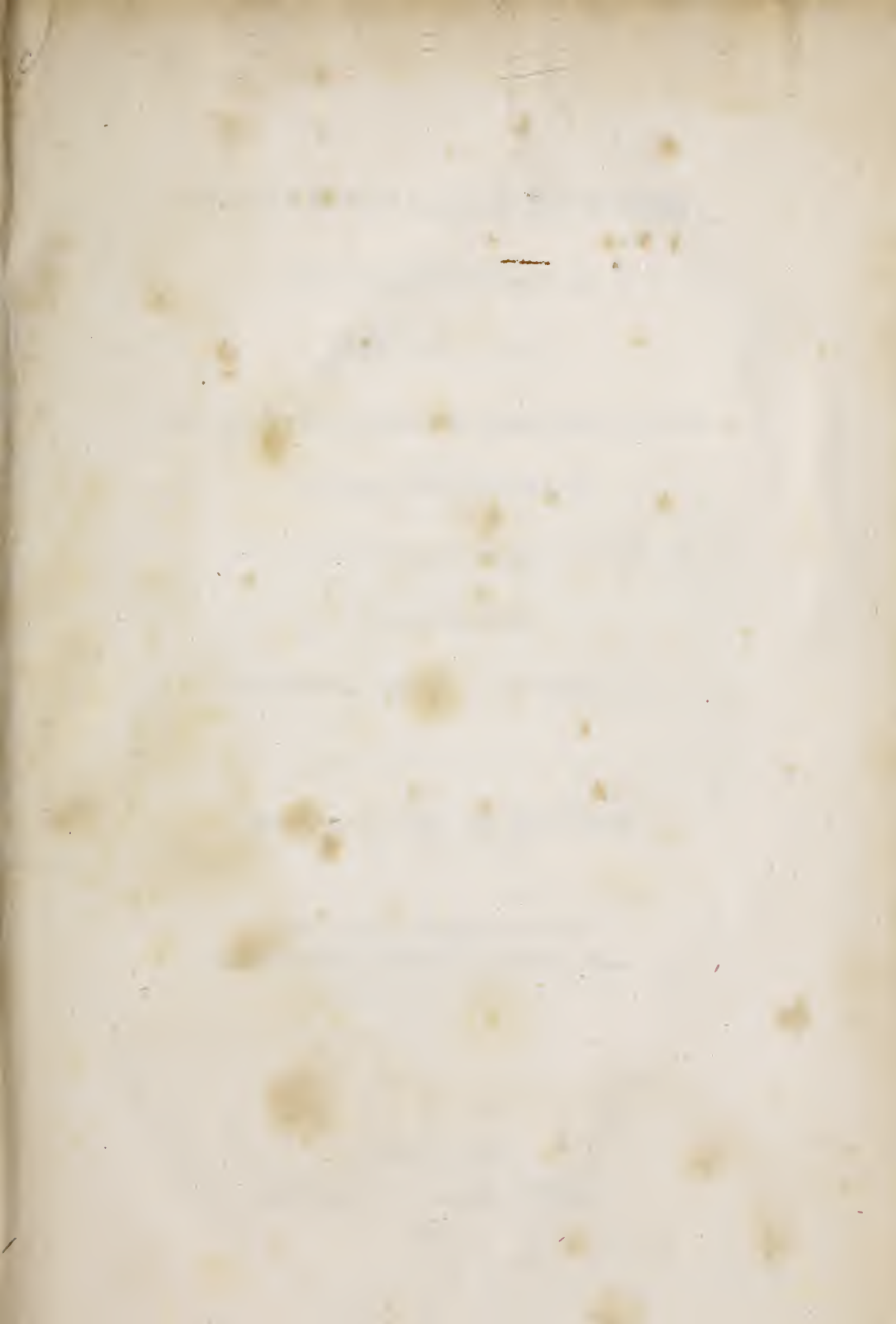
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# HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM:

FROM VARIOUS SOURCES VINDICATED,

ESPECIALLY,

FROM THE CONSIDERATION, THAT GOD'S VISIBLE CHURCH COVENANT IS

UNCHANGABLE,

IS EXPRESSLY ESTABLISHED WITH

FAMILIES,

AND GOD IS THE GOD OF FAMILIES.

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“Come thou, and *all* thy house into the Ark.”

---

BY ISAAC CLINTON, A. M.

Formerly Pastor of a Church in Southwick, Mass., and  
latterly of Lowville, N. Y.

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## PREFACE.

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Many pious christians, who had been exceedingly perplexed with doubts, and darkness, on the subject of infant baptism, did profess to be much relieved, comforted, and satisfied, from reading a Treatise, which I published, a little more than thirty years ago.

For several years past, there have been repeated inquiries after that treatise, but none were to be obtained. I consented, therefore, that a new edition should be printed, and thought only to make a few small corrections : But, upon reflection, the thought occurred, with peculiar force, that the exhibition of God's gracious covenant was *first* made *not* to Abraham, but to Adam, and in his family a visible church was first instituted, and was continued down through all succeeding dispensations, the same covenant, and the same church, with circumstantial variations only.

I have also thought, that it might be useful, especially to common readers, to present a fuller statement of the history of infant baptism, as practised in the christian church, from the time of the apostles to the present day.

Elegance of expression has not been my object—it is not my talent. Abstruse and metaphysical arguments have also been carefully avoided. But facts, plain and undeniable facts, with such fair and legitimate inferences as the humblest capacity may easily understand, are presented in the following work.

What reception it may meet with in the world, is of little concern to me. I am not answerable for its success, but only for the use and improvement of the talent which God gives me even at the eleventh hour of my life. I have the approbation of my own heart, and I believe (what is infinitely more) the approbation of my blessed Saviour.

It is after much solemn prayer and careful attention to the scriptures of truth, that clear views and strong impressions, concerning the *divine will* in establishing the order of Christ's house, and the subjects of his visible church kingdom, crowd themselves upon my mind. Knowing also as I do, the perplexities and doubts of many pious parents, concerning their duty in giving up their children to God in baptism, such are my feelings, that I can no longer forbear communicating to others the fruit of my own labor; and, standing as I do, on the threshold of eternity, no one can reasonably call in question my sincerity.



## SECTION I.

### THE LAW AND COVENANT OF NATURE, IS WHAT ?

The law of nature is an eternal rule of *right*, founded in the nature and fitness of things, and is binding on all rational creatures, according to the circumstances they are in, and the relation they sustain to their creator, and to one another. And as it establishes right, so of course it prohibits wrong.

If we suppose a settlement of people, in some region of country where there had been neither human laws, nor any revelation from God, the following truths are self-evident : They all have an equal right to the enjoyment of their lives, limbs, property, and the pursuit of happiness. No one has any right to harm another, nor even to begin to disturb the happiness of another. And as they are mutually dependant on each other, so the law of nature establishes claims, which one has on another, and imposes on the other correspondent obligations to answer those claims. Are two persons walking peaceably together in a dark evening, each one, for his convenience, with a lamp in his hand, one has no right to put out the other's lamp ; but should one's lamp be put out by some casualty, he has a claim on the other to let him light it by his ; and the other is under a correspondent obligation to let him do it. It is according to the nature and fitness of things that he should do it. And if any one of the before-mentioned persons, in the settlement, by unforeseen accidents, or afflicting providences of God, is reduced to a state of suffering, he has a claim upon the others, to extend their pity, compassion, and charity ; and they are under correspondent obligations to afford relief, as their circumstances may enable them to do it. These claims and obligations are in consequence of our mutual dependance on each other.

Again : As God is our creator and munificent benefactor, he has a claim upon us for our worship, obedience, love and gratitude ; and, according to the law of nature, a correspondent obligation rests upon us, to love, fear, obey and adore him.

Again : As we stand related to one another, both the claims and obligations are of a much higher grade, than when there is no such relation. Especially, husbands and wives, parents and children, have claims upon each other for support and maintenance, not barely in sickness, but in times of health and prosperity : and not only for support, but for all the offices of friendship and affection ; and as the law of nature establishes claims and imposes obligations, so usually nature itself produces feelings correspondent thereto.

Let us now more particularly notice the case of families. The institution of families, based on the law and covenant of nature, is the fruit of infinite wisdom and benevolence. God said, "It is not good for man to be alone, and made the woman to be an help meet for him." He implanted in man a strong propensity for the family state, saying, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they twain shall become one flesh."

No human alliance is so firmly established, no union so intimate, no obligation so sacred, as that between the husband and the wife. They mutually engage to dwell together in love, to be faithful to each other in all the varied circumstances of health and fortune, promoting their joint interest, until death shall part them, and dissolve the union. Thus God created the first human pair, and organized the first human family ; *one* in affection, *one* in interest, and *one* by the mysterious and indissoluble tie of nature ; and with a design, that the world should be peopled by a succession of generations, in a family state. And saith the prophet, Mal. 2, 15 : "And wherefore made he *one* ? That he might seek a godly seed." That is, a seed for his praise, his honor and his glory.

The intimate union, by which the parties, or parents become possessed of each other's persons, their mutual vows and pledges, the mixture of their fortunes, the joint interest they have in their children, all serve, especially the latter, to strengthen, perfect, and perpetuate their relation to each other.

Both parents being related to the same child, that child becomes the medium of a relation between them, which is fix-



ed in nature, and forever unalterable. For both parents being the same flesh, and blood, and bone, with the child, are relatively, and by the mysterious decree of heaven, one flesh, and one blood, with each other. Hence that relation between the parents, which at first was only moral and legal, becomes a relation in nature, so fixed and interwoven, that it can neither cease, nor be disannulled. And, accordingly, all the members of the family are obliged to perform to each other every act and duty which the law and covenant of nature, and the law of such a relation do require; that is, in all things lawful, to seek their best good.

How strong are the claims of an infant child on the parents, and equally strong are the obligations, and commonly the feelings of the parents, towards the child.

No sooner is a child added to a family, than the parents feel the vital influence of the law of nature written in their hearts. While the child is the object of unceasing care, watchfulness and toil, a mere infant, and cannot in the least degree partake in the joys of the family, the parents feel with irresistible force their obligation to seek its best good. What labors will they not perform for it? What hardships will they not endure? What sacrifices will they not make? What joys do they feel in the anticipation of its life and health? What anxiety when it is sick? And how tender is the grief which swells, and wrings, and rends their hearts, if by death it is taken away? What, then, are these warm effusions of their hearts, these overflowings of nature, but the effect and influence of the law, or covenant of nature, which God has written in their hearts? Religion, therefore, in its highest perfection here on earth, has not the least tendency to destroy natural affection, but to regulate, refine, purify and perfect it.

The domestic circle then is clearly designed, by its benevolent author, to contain the most perfect bliss here on the earth. Husbands and wives being thus allied, may repose in each other that confidence, may enjoy that serene peace, that blessed harmony, that pure friendship, no where else on earth to be found. No earthly felicity can compare with that of the domestic circle, where the virtuous wife finds protection, where the helpless children can, with freedom, lean upon the parental arm, and where the faithful husband is rewarded with that satisfaction which nothing but reciprocated friendship

can produce. How desirable and how blessed is such a home; the rich man's richest treasure, and the poor man's full reward, for all his privations and sufferings. Blessed be the God of families!

"By the common law," says Judge Reeve, page 283, "it is the duty of parents to support their minor children. This duty is *founded* in the *law of nature*; and the parent can never discharge, that is, free himself from his obligation to support the child." Again, page 288, "The parent has a right to govern the child; and, as incidental to this, he must have power to correct him. The exercise of this power must be in a great measure discretionary."

The law, or covenant of nature, then, obliges parents not only to nurse, clothe and educate their children, but in all respects to *seek* their *best* good, both for the present life, and for the future. They are required, then, not only to exercise care in feeding and clothing them, while they are young and helpless, but through all the stages of childhood and youth up to mature age or manhood, must continually watch over them—must form their manners, correct their habits, subdue the strength of their inordinate passions, cultivate rude nature, lead them in the paths of virtue, and by every means in their power, either by instruction or discipline, train up and prepare, for immortality and glory, those immortal minds, which they have been the instruments of bringing into existence, and which are dear unto them, and infinitely valuable in the sight of God.

In order, then, that parents may seek the best good of their children, the same law constitutes them the rightful guardians of their children, and not only gives authority, but requires parents to govern their children, as their own enlightened reason and the best good of their children shall require.

Further, from the same law of nature, it follows that children are bound to obey their parents, submit to their government, in every thing lawful, must receive their instructions; and whenever parents become needy and helpless, through sickness or infirmity of age, the children, by the same law of nature, as their ability may be, are required to reciprocate and make suitable returns for the benefits they have received from their parents.

But if we turn to revelation, the plainer guide to truth and



duty, we find that the same law and covenant of nature, and God's revealed law, are perfectly the same as to the substance and extent of their obligation. The law of nature, however, is exhibited to us on general principles, requiring mutual benefits, best good, &c. ; and the law of revelation, which is indeed only an exposition of the law of nature, contains positive precepts, concerning the *manner* of arriving at the same results, viz : mutual benefits, the best good, &c. As for instance, the law of nature requires us, as creatures, to worship God our creator, but the revealed law contains positive precepts as to the manner of doing it. So, as we have seen, the law of nature requires, in general terms, many duties of parents toward their children : but the revealed law contains positive precepts as to the manner of performing those duties, or of seeking the best good of their children.

In the sacred scriptures, God speaks in a manner not to be misunderstood, and is pleased not only to declare himself the *God of families*, but often uses the family connexion, as the pattern and symbol of his affection, and paternal care toward his covenant people. "I am," says he, "a father to Israel." "As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?"

Again : To the natural and internal, God has superadded the external, the visible, and the revealed obligation. As he hath constituted parents the natural guardians of their children, so he *requires* parents to command and teach, and children to obey and learn. Deut. 6, 6 : "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt *teach* them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." 32, 48 : "Ye shall *command* your children to observe and do all the words of this law." Eph. 6, 4. "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "The end designed is, that they may set their hope in God." Psalms, 78, 7.

Children are required to obey and learn. Ex. 20, 12 : "Honor thy father and thy mother." Deut. 27, 16. "Curs-

ed is he that setteth light by his father or his mother." Prov. 1, 18. "My son, *hear the instruction* of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother." Colos. 3, 20. "Children *obey* your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the sight of the Lord."

Hence it is evident, that when God would reveal his will, and establish his external, gracious church covenant, as far, at least, as parents and children, relative duties, and correspondent obligations are included, he has chosen, as its basis, the law and covenant of nature, and made it to run in the same channel with it. And this is suitable and proper, because in both covenants parents are constituted the guardians of their children, and are required to seek their *best* good; and according to the primitive and natural church way, under the law and covenant of nature, God hath forever suited his gracious church covenant, to the family state, and with Adam.

Noah, Abraham, and their seed, hath ratified and sanctified it unto the end of the world. Evidently for this reason, the only natural society is that of families: Therefore, God hath chosen this way, through every dispensation of his grace, and to which he hath suited his most gracious *promise*, which is to families. Gen. 12, 3. "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Christ is here referred to, because as to his human nature, he must descend from Abraham. It is then in Christ that blessings are eminently, originally, and in all ages of the church, extended to families; and, more eminently, under the gospel than before. Again, Jer. 31, 1: "I will be the God of all the *families* of Israel, and they shall be my people." The before-mentioned promise revealed to Abraham, was again repeated to Jacob. Gen. 28, 14. "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This was a gospel promise, and is quoted, Acts 2, 29, and Gal. 3, 8, as being peculiarly fulfilled under the gospel. Christ was, emphatically, the promised seed, and as we said just now, it is in Christ that blessings are eminently, originally, and in all ages of the church, extended to families, and more eminently under the gospel than before.

Thus, blessings are handed down, from one generation to another: Psalm 78, 6. We must, however, be careful to distinguish between real *grace possessed*, and the *external exhibition* of grace. Our opponents, often pretend, and say that



we believe, in hereditary grace descending from parents to children. This we deny. We believe in no such thing. It would be both unscriptural and absurd. But, the external exhibition of grace, does so descend. We say, the external exhibition of grace, in the merciful dealings of God with us, in placing us and our children in a condition to enjoy the best means ; and such as may have the strongest moral influence, both on us and on our children, and in such a condition too, as may be, and is a true ground of the best encouragement for the children of pious parents, to repent, draw near to God for mercy, seek *saving* grace and every needed blessing. This exhibition of grace, we say, with these means and motives, under solemn covenant transactions, does descend from parents to children.

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## SECTION II.

### WHAT IS THE COVENANT OF GRACE ?

The covenant of grace is a merciful decree, or gracious purpose of God, for the recovery of lost sinners of mankind. The sacred Trinity are combined in it. The Father decrees, or purposes ; Jesus Christ, the Son, engages to become a propitiatory sacrifice, that by his imputed righteousness, returning sinners might be justified and saved. The Holy Spirit engages to enlighten, renew and sanctify, and prepare the hearts of sinners for salvation.

This decree, or purpose of God, is eternal. Eph. 1, 4 : "According, as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world." Verse 11 : "In whom also having obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him that worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." 3, 11. "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

But in time there must be a promulgation, manifestation, or exhibition of the gracious privileges, or blessings which were granted, with instituted ordinances, modes of worship, symbols, signs, tokens, or seals of ratifications, or confirmation.

A covenant, in the common acceptation of the word, is a mutual contract between parties, as the indenture of an apprentice, a deed of a piece of land, or a charter of a province, by a prince, granting privileges to his subjects. A covenant also, in the common acceptation of the word, supposes not only parties, but conditions obligatory on each of the parties. In the covenant of grace, however, *God himself* is the only contracting party. He alone proposes the conditions, bestows the blessings, and, in a word, grants a charter of privileges. All that man has to do in the case, is to accept and perform the conditions required on his part; and even this, God, by his grace, enables him to perform. This also God engages. Again: The promulgation of the covenant of grace, is accompanied with great, special and precious promises, and is exhibited to us in the nature both of a *free promise*, and of a *positive law*. Hence it is, by way of emphasis, so often called *The Promise*. When this covenant, this charter of privileges, was first established with Abraham, it was, as we may say, all promise. Rom. 4, 13: "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not made to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Gal. 3, 18. "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more by promise; but God gave it to Abraham by *promise*."

To this covenant, this charter of privileges, this exhibition of grace freely promised, God is pleased to affix symbols, signs, tokens, or seals. A covenant seal is a sign, token, or witness, that the covenant thus sealed is ratified, confirmed, and shall most assuredly be fulfilled. A seal, says Mr. Cruden, in his concordance of the bible, is an instrument where-with letters and other writings are sealed and ratified. Johnson says it is a stamp engraved with a particular impression fixed upon the wax that closes letters, or is affixed as a testimony. And according to Shakspeare, Milton, and others, any act of confirmation, attestation, or ratification, is called a seal. When covenants are made among men, and written on parchment or paper, the wax is placed opposite the signature, and the impression is made on it. The covenant is then sealed and ratified. The impression, as well as the instrument, is called a seal. When the wax which closed the letter is broken, we say the seal is broken, otherwise we say



the seal is whole. So the operation of the divine spirit on the hearts of men is called a seal. 2d Cor. 1, 22 : "Who hath sealed us, and given us the earnest of the spirit." Eph. 4, 30 : "And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye were sealed unto the day of redemption." So the apostle calls circumcision a *seal*. Rom. 4, 11 : "Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised." Circumcision was a seal, and assurance on God's part, that he would assuredly fulfil to Abraham, and to all his faithful covenant people, all that he had promised in the covenant.

Again : The apostle says to the Corinthians, 1st Epistle, 9, 2 : "The seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." Ye are the certain evidence of my divine call. Whatever it is, then, which signifies to witness, confirm, or ratify, may with propriety be called a seal, as the sacrifices, which were symbols of the blood of Christ, being instituted by God himself, were signs, tokens and ratifications of his covenant faithfulness, and have ever been considered seals of his gracious covenant. So also ordinances, as circumcision and the pass-over under the former dispensation, and baptism and the Lord's supper under the latter, are on God's part tokens of his covenant faithfulness, and ratifications of gracious privileges, decreed, granted, or chartered to his visible church.

Again : As we have before observed, this covenant is also a law positively binding on us. The learned Dr. Dwight, speaking of the covenant established with Abraham, says : "The covenant under discussion is proposed to us as a law, and our obligations to conform to its terms, arise solely from the command of God, and are binding on us, absolutely, whether we consent to them or not. We are in no sense at liberty to consent, or not consent ; but our compliance is required by infinite authority. The *seal* of this covenant, therefore, is not set by us, but by God upon us ; and that, whether we comply voluntarily with its terms or not ; and is to be set upon such persons, as he hath thought proper to direct." Again, he says : "It will be seen that a seal, when annexed to the covenant by God, himself the author of it, is a solemn sign, and proof that it is his covenant, and contains the terms on which he has chosen to act towards those whom he has involved in it, and whom he has required to become parties to

it. It is his seal, annexed authoritatively, by himself. It is a seal to be put upon mankind. It is, therefore, to be put or placed upon all those whom he has included in the covenant, so far as he has directed them to be sealed. Every one of those is a proper subject of the seal. No question can be asked, concerning the fitness of such persons, to receive the seal; because, that point has been already settled by God himself, in the directions which he has given to seal them.”—DWIGHT’S SERMONS.

God says *I will*, and *ye shall*. “*I will* be your God, and *ye shall* be my people.” His promise proceeds from himself—is free and gracious. His command is imperative. We must obey. Consent was not asked, even of Abraham himself.

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### SECTION III.

#### THE FIRST EXHIBITION OR DISPENSATION OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

The history of nearly two thousand years, is briefly comprehended, in a few of the first chapters in the bible; and though but little is recorded, yet it is of such a nature, that, together with other scriptures which allude to primitive transactions, much more may safely be inferred. From the parallel which the apostle draws between Adam and Christ, (Rom. 5, 12,) it is evident, that God did make with Adam, while in a state of innocence, a *covenant* of works, and did constitute him a covenant head for all his posterity. The condition of that covenant, was pure obedience; and on this condition, that covenant was suspended; and when the performance of that condition ceased, the covenant itself ceased to exist.

But the covenant of grace, as we have before seen, is God’s everlasting covenant, suspended on the perfect and unfailing obedience of Christ the mediator. An exhibition of this covenant, was made to our first parents, and their seed, as a free gift, a promise, a grant, a charter of privileges, or bestowment of mercy, and was administered, through several



dispensations, by the use of types and symbols, until Christ the antitype was himself offered.

From eternity, as we have seen. God decreed grace for lost man, and immediately upon the fall of our first parents, he made to them an exhibition of it. He beheld them guilty, wretched, and ruined, attempting to cover themselves with garments of figleaves. He pronounced the curse due to sin, but revealed the Saviour, who, in time, by his own obedience and suffering, should atone for sin, satisfy the law, and redeem repenting man from its curse. Here was the first exhibition of the covenant of grace : yes, covenant of grace, for it could be no other. The covenant of works being broken, God could now treat with sinners only in a way of grace—free and sovereign grace.

In pronouncing the curse upon the serpent, God plainly and fully revealed, to our first mother, her recovery and glorious triumph over her arch deceiver, and eventually his defeat and ruin. “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” This was a wonderful promulgation of mercy. Here Christ was revealed, stronger than the strong man, armed. Here in very deed Christ was promised, and in him all other blessings, spiritual and temporal. Compare Gen. 3, 15—17, 7. Gal. 3, 16. So the passage, as far as I have known, has been understood by all commentators.

Very soon it is recorded that God made coats of skins, to cover their nakedness; and very soon also sacrifices were offered, which, as we learn from St. Paul, were offered by faith in Jesus Christ. Heb. 11. 4 : “By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness, that his own works were righteous, God testifying of his gifts.” Hence we may certainly infer that much concerning religion, both in doctrine and practice, was revealed and taught, which Moses has not recorded, and that our first parents were instructed into the same system of morals, and doctrines of faith in Christ, which has ever been the foundation of the church of Christ in the world. We say instructed, because we can not conceive that sinners, under the condemnation of the law, except they were taught, could ever think of worshipping God, and appeasing his just indignation

and wrath, by killing innocent animals, and offering them in sacrifice. This would be the most unnatural thought which could ever enter a man's mind. But when we understand, that it was by faith in Christ, and that God testified of Abel's sacrifice, that is, gave some visible token of his acceptance of the offering, then the mystery ceases. It is no longer a matter of doubt. All difficulties are solved. These sacrifices were instituted, by God himself, who was well pleased with them, testified his acceptance of them, and taught those who offered them, to look to Christ, who, in a figure, was exhibited in these offerings.

It is evident also, that there were under that dispensation, many pious and good people, though but few are distinctly named. One was a Prophet, and probably others. It seems also, that there were revivals of religion at particular times. Gen. 4, 26 : "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." This does not suppose that they had never done it before ; we know to the contrary. But now, pious men distinguished themselves, by uncommon zeal and fervor in their devotions, and probably there was a great ingathering of souls into the kingdom of Christ. God's holy spirit was copiously poured out. But in process of time, religion again declined, wickedness prevailed, and God said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man ; his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." During this period, pious people were by death removed to a better world, and the wicked were left to hardness of heart, to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath ; and except they had sinned against great light, from the instructions of godly men, and also against strong convictions from the strivings of God's spirit upon their hearts, they could not have been prepared for so aggravated an overthrow and destruction.

The various passages of scripture, which allude to these primitive transactions, do much to explain them. The prophet Isaiah, enjoying the reality of what those coats of skins signified or were symbols of, says, 61, 14 : "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation. He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Rom. 13, 14 : "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." So Christ himself, Rev. 3, 18, evidently alludes to this transaction of clothing our first parents, and considers those robes symbolical of his righteous-



ness : " I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear." And Rev. 13, 8, Christ is called the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, in allusion to the firstlings of the flock which Abel offered, and probably were offered daily by others.

As our first parents had no permission to eat flesh, and as no permission to eat flesh was given until after the deluge, (compare Gen. 1, 20, and 9, 31,) we may safely infer that these coats of skins were the skins of animals, which were offered in sacrifice, and the first sacrifices were lambs of the purest snow-white hue, pointing out the innocency and purity of the great propitiatory sacrifice, and the garments made of them were emblems of HIS righteousness, which alone could cover their spiritual nakedness, and shield them from the tempests of wrath divine. The history of Abel certainly agrees with this idea. He was a keeper of sheep, and brought of the firstlings of his flock, that is lambs. So also through all the dispensations of ceremonies, *lambs* were considered the brightest emblems, symbols, or types of Christ the Saviour.

Mr. Henry, in his commentary, speaking of the passage "coats of skins," says : "These coats of skins had a significance. The beasts, whose skins they were, must be slain to shew them what death is. It is supposed they were not slain for food, but for sacrifice, to typify the grand sacrifice which should, in the end of the world, be offered once for all. Thus the first thing that died was a sacrifice, or Christ in a figure, who is therefore said to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. These sacrifices were divided between God and man, in token of reconciliation. The flesh was offered to God, a whole burnt offering ; the skins were given to man for clothing, signifying that Jesus Christ, having offered himself to God a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour, we are to clothe ourselves with his righteousness, as with a garment, that the shame of our nakedness may not appear."

Dr. Clark, in his commentary on the bible, says : "It is very likely that the skins, out of which their clothing was made, were taken off anima's, whose blood had been poured out as a sin-offering unto God. For, as we find Cain and

Abel offering sacrifices unto God, we may fairly presume that God had given them instructions on this head ; nor is it likely the notion of a sacrifice would ever have occurred to the mind of man, without an express revelation from God. Hence we may infer, 1st : That as Adam and Eve needed this clothing as soon as they fell, and death had not yet made any ravages in the animal world, it is most likely that these skins were taken off victims offered under the direction of God himself, and in faith of HIM who, in the fulness of time, was to make atonement by his death. And 2d : It seems reasonable also, that this matter should be brought about in such a way, that Satan and Death should have no triumph ; when the very first death, that took place in the world, was an emblem and type of that death which should conquer Satan, destroy his empire, reconcile God to man, convert man to God, sanctify human nature, and prepare it for heaven."

The opinion of others, might be adduced, but it is needless. There can be no mistake here. It is, then, evident enough that the clothing, which God put upon our first parents, was *symbolical* of the righteousness of Christ ; and it is evident, from the nature of the case, that the same *symbolical* clothing was put upon the children as upon the parents.

The sacrifices which were offered by faith in Christ, and concerning which God himself testified his acceptance, make it evident that God himself did institute them, and give instructions concerning the nature of them, and the manner they must be offered, that they might be acceptable to him.

This clothing, then, and these sacrifices, have ever been justly considered as signs, tokens, or seals of God's gracious covenant.

That the term *seed*, used in the promise made to Eve, did include her natural seed, as well as Christ's, is evident, because this is the primitive and common acceptation of the term. That in this instance, it included Christ, no one ever disputed ; and that it included her natural seed, as children, or posterity, is evident from the use of the term elsewhere. So Eve herself understood it ; because, when Seth was born, she said, "The Lord hath appointed me another *seed*, instead of Abel whom Cain slew." When it is said, "Thy seed shall inherit the land,"—"Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven," children or posterity only are meant. But when it is



said, Gal. 3, 16 : " Now to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and unto seeds, as of many ; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." It is the same as in the promise made to Eve, both Christ and natural seed, are comprehended. And it is fully evident that Eve's natural seed, as well as her husband, were comprehended equally with herself, in the enjoyment of external privileges and blessings exhibited in the covenant of grace.

Finally, considering the society of families instituted by God himself, based on the law and covenant of nature ; and considering the comprehensive nature of the promise made to Eve, which must be parallel with God's great family promise before noticed, it is fully evident that the children, as well as the parents, were justly entitled to every privilege they were capable of receiving benefits from ; and most clearly they were capable then of being in covenant with God, of receiving blessings from God, and of being the proper subjects of the seal of the covenant, which was then the clothing, as they were in after ages. No one then, except he can find an express prohibition, or some passage from whence a prohibition can be inferred, can question the children's right to the *covenant seal*, together with their parents : And as the parents were constituted the natural guardians of the children, it would have been impious, cruel, and a violation of the law of nature, to deny them any privilege to which they were justly entitled.

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## SECTION IV.

### THE SECOND DISPENSATION OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

When God declared unto Noah the wickedness of the inhabitants of the old world, he said unto him, Gen. 6, 18 : " But with thee will I establish my covenant : and thou shalt come into the ark ; thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee." God says, "*My* covenant." This was before the flood ; and it is evident, from this ex-

pression, "I will establish *my* covenant," that God's covenant had not only been exhibited, before the flood, but was well known ; and that Noah well understood the expression, as one familiar to him, though there is no mention of the term covenant, until now. Again, chapter 7, 2, God says to Noah, "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, and of beasts that are not clean by two." Hence also, it is evident that a distinction, at some early period, had been made between *clean* and *unclean* beasts. This, also, Noah well understood. God says, "I will establish *my* covenant with *you*."

After the flood, chapter 9, 3, God said unto Noah, and to his sons, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you ; even as the green herb have I given you all things." This was the first permission that was given to man to eat flesh. Previous to this, only the herb of the field, and the fruit thereof, had been given him for food. Again, chapter 9, 8 : "And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons, saying, And I, behold, I do establish *my* covenant with you, and with your *seed* after you." Here, seed are *expressly mentioned* as being included in *God's covenant*, with their parents. Before, it was the woman, Eve and her seed ; now it is you, and your seed. God goes on to say, "And with every living creature, that is with you, of the fowl, and of the cattle, and every beast of the earth, with you." It is no objection that the beasts are included. The earth, even the whole creation, had been cursed for the sin of Adam. Now, through the abounding grace of the second Adam, all temporal, as well as spiritual blessings are given to man. The earth is blessed. God giveth rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, and filleth our hearts with food and gladness. Every living creature, of fowl, of cattle, and of every beast of the earth, was preserved with Noah in the ark, and now are included to receive blessing according to their natures, and the design of their creation. But doth God take care for cattle ? Or, for man's sake is this spoken ? For man's sake, no doubt, this is spoken. God preserveth, blesseth, and increaseth the cattle by thousands and by ten thousands. He maketh oxen strong to labor ; but man hath dominion over them all. They are laid at man's feet ; their flesh is given to man for meat, and their labor and strength for man's benefit.



We further notice here, that as the flesh of beasts was now given to man for food, in common, so the symbolical use of their skins, as a token of the covenant, was discontinued, and God appointed a *new* token or *seal* of the covenant, viz : the bow in the cloud. Chap. 9, 11 : "And I will establish my covenant with you." 12 : "And God said this is the token of the covenant." 13 : "I do set my bow, in the cloud, and it shall be for a *token* of the covenant, between me and the earth." 15 : "And I will remember my covenant." 16 : "And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it that I may remember the *everlasting* covenant." 17 : "And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me, and all flesh that is upon the earth."

Before the flood, God said unto Noah, "I will establish *my* covenant with you." That is, all others will shortly be excluded from its blessings, and you only shall enjoy them. After the flood, he speaks of it as the *everlasting* covenant. The bow in the cloud, he constitutes the token of the *covenant*, and says, that he will look upon the bow, and remember the *everlasting* covenant.

We remark further, that the benefits, privileges or blessings, granted under the first dispensation, before the flood, unless expressly revoked, must in the nature of things proceed on, to the next dispensation, after the flood. But we find nothing revoked. The token of the covenant, or covenant seal, is changed ; but the covenant is the same, because it is everlasting ; and the second dispensation, instead of abridging the privileges of the first, does grant some additional blessings. The covenant, being the same everlasting covenant, every dispensation of it, explains and illustrates the nature of covenant privileges, under all former dispensations. *Sacrifices* were continued, as they were before, seals of the covenant. When Noah came out of the ark, he took of every clean beast, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and the Lord smelled a sweet savor in the sacrifice which he offered.

Here, as we see, the covenant is *established* with Noah, his sons, and their *seed*. They are *federati*. The covenant, and its blessings, are as much to the *seed*, as to Noah and to his sons themselves. The blessings and privileges must, of course, proceed on, to all who do not dissent, reject, and put

these blessings far from them. On Noah's account, all his house, his family were privileged. The reason or condition was, "For *thee* have I seen righteous before me." "The like figure whereunto baptism saves us," (1st Peter, 3, 21,) brings us and our households within the covenant, where we enjoy covenant blessings, and covenant promises. When any one becomes a believer, then, (Luke 19, 9,) salvation comes to his house. When people enjoy covenant blessings, and the means of grace, which the covenant faithfulness of God secures, they are in the way to salvation, and are said to be saved. So said the Saviour, in the passage just quoted: "This day, is salvation come to this house, for he also is a son of Abraham."

Noah, his sons, and their *seed*, being *federati* in this covenant, as Eve and her seed, then, whatever blessings, or privileges, did belong to Noah, did belong to his sons, and also to their seed, except by wilful impiety they rejected themselves.

We repeat it, this splendid exhibition of the covenant of grace, made to Noah, was no abridgment of former privileges. Whatever privileges he enjoyed before the flood, under the first dispensation, especially communion with God by sacrifices, by which God sealed to him his covenant mercy, were continued; and, instead of symbolical garments, the bow in the cloud was a token or seal, equally clear and sure. And, in allusion to this admirable covenant transaction with Noah, his sons, and their seed, Christ is beautifully and sublimely described, Rev. 4, 3. 11, 1: "With a rainbow upon his head, and a rainbow about his throne."

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## SECTION V.

### THE SAME COVENANT, ESTABLISHED WITH ABRAHAM, OR THE THIRD DISPENSATION OF IT.

Abraham was in the covenant, as it was established with Noah, and his sons, and their seed, and in the enjoyment of all the covenant blessings which were then conferred, as communion with God, by sacrifices, which were types of Christ.



and seals of God's grace ; also, the token of the covenant, viz : the *bow* in the cloud. And so were all others who had not either rejected or dissented from the conditions of it. But God was pleased now to select Abraham, from the rest of the world, as he formerly did Noah, from the people of the old world, and now to renew his promises of covenant blessings in a manner more explicit than before. Gen. 12, 2 : "I will make of thee a great nation : And in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." 17, 7 : "And I will establish *my* covenant between *me* and *thee*, and thy *seed* after thee, in their generations ; to be a *God* to *thee* and thy *seed*, after thee in their generations." Verse 10 : "This is my covenant (the token of the covenant) which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy *seed* after thee. Every man child among you shall be circumcised, and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you." 12 : "He that is eight days old, shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations. He that is born in thy house, or bought with thy money of any stranger, that is not of thy seed." 13. "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised ; and my covenant (the *token* of my covenant) shall be in your flesh, for an *everlasting* covenant." 23. "And Abraham took Ishmael, his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money; every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin, in the self-same day, as God had said unto him," &c.

The covenant here, as in the preceding dispensations, is exhibited in the nature of a free *promise*. The blessedness promised is, "I will make of thee a great nation." "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." "I will be a *God* to *thee*, and to thy *seed* after thee, in their generations." "The token of my covenant shall be in your flesh, for an *everlasting* covenant."

The following are some of the New Testament testimonials :—Rom. 4. 11 : "And he received the sign of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised." It was a sign of inward grace, of the circumcision of the heart. Deut. 10, 16, 30, 6. It is here declared to be a seal of the righteousness of faith. Rom. 10, 6. : "Of the righteousness which is of faith." Or, in



general, it was a seal of God's gracious promises to believers, and the main thing sealed was the righteousness of faith. Again, verse 13: "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not made to Abraham, or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."—How was Abraham the heir of the world? He was selected to stand at the head of that dispensation. The church must be perpetuated in his line. But especially he inherited blessings promised to the world. Gen. 12, 3: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." "All nations." Gal. 3, 8. And how was this inheritance, or this heirship obtained? Not through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Verse 16: "Therefore, it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise (covenant) might be sure to all the seed; not to that which is of the law (the Jews) but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all; as it is written I have made thee a father of many nations." The Gentiles, when brought into the church, are as much the seed of Abraham as the Jews. Rom. 15, 8: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises (covenant) made with our fathers." Gal. 3, 8: "And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before, the gospel unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.'"

REMARKS.—If, then, the gospel; if the righteousness of faith; if Christ himself was the minister of circumcision; if the seal of the righteousness of faith, for God's truth, confirming the promises, that he will be a God to believers and their seed, are essential requisites and articles in the covenant of grace, then that covenant was the covenant of grace.

In the several preceding dispensations of the covenant of grace which we have considered, there have been no essential alterations. Benefits and blessings granted, under the first, were continued under the second, with some additional grants or favors, but no repeal of any thing. If the seal of symbolical clothing under the first, was under the second changed, and the bow substituted in its place, the same *grace* was sealed as before. And if under the third, the seal was changed again, and circumcision took its place, the benefit sealed was the same as before. The institution of sacrifices continued

through all the dispensations, from Adam down to the death of Christ. These sacrifices, as we have seen, were seals or ratifications of covenant promises and blessings ; and if the other external seal has been changed, that makes no change concerning benefits and blessings sealed. The same *subjects* were sealed, and blessings ratified, by the one as by the other.

Every privilege, grant, or blessing, which God has ever covenanted to fallen man under any of these dispensations, was an exhibition of mercy, of the nature of a free and gracious *promise*, proceeding from God himself. God says, "My covenant,"—"The everlasting covenant," &c. God alone proposes the conditions. Man is required to accept and obey. Indeed, after the fall, it was not consistent for God to treat with man, sinful man, undone and ruined man, in any other than in a way of grace.

Each dispensation does much to explain and illustrate the one preceding it. Each, after the first, has some additional grants, blessings and favors ; which, however, are circumstantial, and of minor consideration, because even the first contained and exhibited all the essentials of the covenant of grace ; and, afterwards, there was no retrenchment, no diminution, no repeal of benefits and privileges before granted. Noah stood in the first when, with him, God established the second ; and Abraham stood in the second, when, with him, God established the third. In each, the covenant was the same. Each has an exhibition of God's merciful dealing with fallen, sinful man. Christ, in the riches and fulness of his grace, as the atoning sacrifice for sin, was exhibited as the *object* of faith ; and the external exhibition of God's revealed, gracious covenant, is established on the *firm* basis of the law or covenant of nature, and runs parallel with it. As we have seen, Eve's natural seed, as well as her husband, were with herself included, and were, with her, sharers in promises, privileges and blessings. The promise was to the woman Eve, and her *seed*. To Noah and to Abraham, the promise is as much to the seed, as to themselves. "I will be a God to thee and to *thy seed*." The covenant was as much established with Noah's seed as with himself ; and as much with Abraham's seed as with himself. The *seed*, therefore, are born in covenant. Putting the seal on them, at eight days old, was only a ratification of their covenant, standing and

privileges. And when this was neglected, God says, (Gen. 17, 14 :) "The uncircumcised man child, hath broken my covenant." The man child, which was not in the covenant, could not be said to be a breaker of the covenant.

Children were always entitled to all the privileges of the covenant, the ends and benefits of which they were capable of receiving ; or, in other words, where there was no impediment, by means of *natural* incapacity. They were capable of being in covenant with God ; and their *fitness* for this, God himself has decided ; and if we say aught against it, we are reproaching God. They were fit subjects of the seal of God's covenant, or he would not have required that it should be put upon them. They were capable of being regenerated by the spirit of God, for this is a part of the promise. Deut. 30, 6 : "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Isaiah, 44, 3 : "I will pour my spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thine offspring." All this they were capable of, as from the mouth of God we are warranted to say. They were also capable of receiving continual blessing from God, and were the objects of his perpetual care.

Nor was it any objection that Abraham was commanded to bring in and circumcise, all who were bought with his money, or born in his house ; because, in that age, every head of a family was permitted to exercise the office of the priesthood, in his own house. He was required to have a religious household. Deut. 18, 19 : "For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." He might have no irreligious servant, who would not submit to the orders of his house.

Mr. HENRY's commentary on Rom. 4, 16, will close this section. "Now, if infants were then capable of receiving the seal of the covenant of grace, which proves they were within the verge of the covenant, how they came to be now cast out of covenant, and incapable of the seal ; by what severe sentence they were thus rejected and incapable, *those* are concerned to make out, that not only reject, but nullify, and reproach the baptism of the seed of believers."



## SECTION VI.

## THE PASSOVER INSTITUTED,—PROSELYTES ADMITTED, &amp;c.

When the children of Israel, under the immediate guidance of God himself, were about to leave the polluted land of Egypt, and take their journey towards the land of Canaan, the ordinance of the passover was instituted. A lamb must be taken according to the family. (Exod. 12, 21.) It must be roasted in the fire. Not a bone of it might be broken. It must be eaten in a travelling posture, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. It was, of all others, the most striking emblem of Christ, making the atonement, and delivering his redeemed people from the power and dominion of sin. Moses, God's minister, who was commissioned to institute it, taught the people to keep this service by faith in Christ. Heb. 11, 28. Heaven was the true Canaan exhibited to them. Christ the lamb of God the true sacrifice. Sincerity and truth, the unleavened bread, and deep repentance the bitter herbs. So "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." 1st Cor. 5, 7. So we must receive him, and travel towards the Canaan that is above.

This was a family service. The injunction to keep it was to families expressly, including men, women and children. It must however be understood, that the latter must first be instructed into the nature and revealed design of it, before they partook of it. Exod. 12, 26 : "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, when he passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt; when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses." This enjoins upon the parents to instruct their children into the nature of this institution, and it is supposed that they did not usually partake of it until about twelve years of age.

The sprinkling of the blood seems rather to be a service distinct from the passover. Heb. 11, 28 : "By faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood." The injunction was, Gen. 12, 22 : "And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop,

and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel, and the two side posts, with the blood that is in the basin : And none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.” 13 : “ And the blood shall be for a *token* upon the houses where you are : And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not come nigh you to destroy you.” Here is the grace of the gospel. This was the symbol of the blood of Christ—“the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” “The everlasting covenant, (says Mr. Henry,) like the basin in the conservatory of this blood. Faith is the bunch of hyssop by which we apply the promises to ourselves, and the benefits of the blood of Christ laid up in them.”

The sprinkling of the blood was a service performed by the parents, not for themselves only, but for their children also. It was a family token. The *whole family* was distinguished from the families of the world, and benefitted by it. No one, old or young, might go out at the door of his house, but must there remain, and see the salvation of God. Known by that token, they were saved, if they remained in the house ; not but the destroying angel could have known an Israelite, old or young, from an Egyptian, had he seen him in the street, or in any other place : But God would have the *whole family* known and distinguished by this *token*, which pointed them to the blood of atonement. And since the blood of atonement is actually offered, can it be less the will of God, that parents and children should be connected and distinguished by a *covenant token*, than before ?

At this time, God was pleased to make provision for the admission of all nations to a participation of the same spiritual blessings, as were granted to the Jews, the natural seed of Abraham. Exod. 12, 48 : “ When a stranger will sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it ; and he shall be as one that is born in the land. One law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.” The qualifications required of such stranger are mentioned in Isaiah 56, 6. He must join himself to the Lord, to serve him, must love the name of the Lord, and take hold of his covenant.

Many times these strangers were numerous. A mixed

multitude of them were present, when the passover was first celebrated, and went up with the children of Israel out of Egypt. Here, provision was made for them to enter into the covenant, and enjoy the benefit of its *seals*. In the New-Testament, they are called proselytes, which signifies, *come to unite*. When Peter preached on the day of pentecost, proselytes were present from every nation under Heaven.—“One law shall be to him that is home-born, and to the stranger that sojourneth among you.” This is to be understood concerning spiritual, and not concerning temporal privileges. The proselytes were not incorporated with the nation. They had no inheritance in the land of Canaan, which was given exclusively to Abraham’s natural seed in their generations. No foreigner might own any of it. Neither might it pass from one tribe to another, even in Israel. Numb. 36, 7. Neither were the proselytes, in all cases, under the same obligations as the Jews. They were not bound to marry wives in their own nation, but might marry in any nation. Neither when one of them died, having no children, was his brother required to marry the widow of the deceased. In temporal privileges and interests, there was a wide distinction between Jews and proselytes. But in *religious privileges* and moral obligations, there was no difference. They were incorporated into the church, but not into the nation. In this respect, they were as fully in the covenant, and had the same right to the seals of the covenant, viz : to circumcision, to the passover, and to communion with God by sacrifices, as the Jews.

In the time of Isaiah the prophet, it seems the proselytes complained of this distinction, between the Jews and them. Isaiah 56, 3 : “Neither let the son of the stranger (the proselyte) that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, “The Lord hath separated me from his people.” Verse 6, “Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants ; every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and that taketh hold of my covenant ; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar. For my house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”



In spiritual things there was no distinction. The proselyte was equally in the covenant established with Abraham, entitled to its seals, and interested in its promises. When a man became a proselyte, his children, however, were *required*. "Let all his males be circumcised." *God would not* receive the parent without the children. In his right, as their parent, they must be received into the visible church. The parent was not at liberty to bring them in or not. He must do it. He could not be received himself, except his males were circumcised, as well as himself.

This free admission of proselytes, at the departure of the chosen tribes out of Egypt, was the beginning of the fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham, that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed. And the Saviour's commission to his disciples to go into all the earth, and disciple or proselyte all nations, was in accordance with it. The same idea is confirmed, Gal. 3, 8 : "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

These proselytes enjoying no temporal inheritance in the land of Canaan, nor bound to observe the peculiarities of the Jews, but enjoying all the spiritual privileges and blessings secured by the covenant made with Abraham, were a fair sample of the christian church under the gospel.

The objection then which our brethren make and endeavor to maintain, viz: that circumcision was not a seal of the covenant of grace, but only a *seal* of right to the land of Canaan, is here fully exposed, it is not true, and has no weight, because the Jews for nearly six hundred years after Abraham, did not enjoy the land of Canaan, but were as fully in the covenant made with Abraham, as when they were in full possession of the land. And the *proselytes* who never had any inheritance in it, but were expressly and positively excluded from such inheritance, were required to be circumcised—were as fully in the covenant made with Abraham, and had the full enjoyment of the seals of the covenant and all spiritual privileges, as the natural descendants of Abraham.

Our opponents seem freely to admit that the disclosure which God made to Abraham, as recorded in the 12th chap-

ter of Genesis, was the covenant of grace : But the covenant established, as recorded in the 17th chapter, they say, was not the covenant of grace, but a covenant of works, and circumcision, the seal of it, was only a seal of *right* to the land of Canaan. In support of this admission and denial, they quote the words of St. Paul, (Gal. 3, 9,) that the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, was four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law ; and according to the marginal dates in the bible, agrees with the former, and not with the latter. And as obedience was required of Abraham, as a condition on his part, in the 17th chapter. and as the land of Canaan was a part of the promise on God's part, it was only a covenant of works, a bargain which God made with Abraham, that if Abraham would do thus and so, God would do thus and so, in giving him the land of Canaan, and other temporal blessings. This idea, as strange as it is, has been propagated with much zeal in this region of country in which I live. If they acknowledge that the covenant, recorded in the 17th chapter, was the covenant of grace, the whole foundation of their denial of infant baptism is at once torn up and overthrown. It seems strange to me, and doubtless to others, that any people of serious reflection should entertain a belief of this kind. I can call it nothing but delusion ! The truth is plainly this : It is all one covenant ; and a disclosure, in part, was made to Abraham, as recorded in the 12th chapter, but was not fully completed and established, until sometime afterwards, as recorded in the 17th chapter. Here it was more fully disclosed, and by a solemn oath on God's part established, and by a seal obligatory on Abraham's part, obliging him and others to be obedient to God, in the exercise of faith, according to the tenor of the covenant relation now entered into—God being their covenant God, and they his covenant people. The full import of this seal we shall shew more at large hereafter.

And, that heaven was the true Canaan promised to Abraham and all believers, and the temporal Canaan, flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands, was but a type of heaven, we learn not only from the tenor of the covenant itself, but from many such expressions as these : “ God gave Abraham none inheritance in it, no not so much as to set his foot on.” “ He was a stranger, a pilgrim, and a sojourner in it.”



“He sought a better country, that is, an heavenly.” “A city, which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.” Joshua led the people over Jordan, into the earthly Canaan. But he gave them not the true rest. Joshua was but a type of Christ, in whom the covenant was confirmed of God, who led Abraham and all true believers then, and who leads them now, over the Jordan of death, into the land of true promise. See also Heb. 8, 5 ; 9, 23, 24 ; 11, 16 ; 12, 22.

We will here introduce the remarks of Matthew Henry, in his commentary on this place : “We have here, says he, the continuance of the covenant, intimated in three things. (1.) It is established not to be altered or revoked ; it is fixed, it is ratified, it is made as firm as the Divine power and truth can make it. (2.) It is entailed ; it is a covenant, not with Abraham only, then it would die with him ; but with his seed after him, not only with his seed after the flesh, but his spiritual seed. (3.) It is everlasting, in the evangelical sense and meaning of it. The covenant of grace is everlasting ; it is from everlasting in the counsels of it ; and to everlasting in the consequences of it ; and the external administration of it, is transmitted with the seal of it to the seed of believers, and the internal administration of it, by the spirit, to Christ’s seed in every age.

(2.) The contents of the covenant. It is a covenant of promises, exceeding great and precious promises. There are two which indeed are all sufficient : (1.) That God would be their God. v. 7, 8. All the privileges of the covenant, all its joys, and all its hopes, are summed up in this. A man needs desire no more, to make him happy. What God is himself, that he will be to his people ; his wisdom there is, to guide and counsel them ; his power there is, to protect and support them ; his goodness there is, to supply and comfort them. Whatever faithful worshippers can expect from the God they serve, believers shall find in God as their’s. This is enough, but not all. (2.) That Canaan should be their everlasting possession, v. 8, God had before promised this land to Abraham and his seed. Chap. 15, 18. But here, where it is promised, for an everlasting possession, sure it must be looked upon as a type of heaven’s happiness, that everlasting rest which remains for the people of God. Heb. 4, 9. This is that better country, to which Abraham had



an eye, and the grant of which, was that, which answered the vast extent and compass of that promise, that God would be to them a God. So that if God had not prepared and designed this, he would have been ashamed to be called their God. Heb. 11, 16. "As the land of Canaan was secured to the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh, so heaven is secured to all his spiritual seed, by a covenant, and for a possession truly everlasting."

We ask then, Can any thing be more inconsistent with truth, with the divine conduct, in the scheme of redemption, than the idea, that this covenant established in the 17th chapter, was a covenant of works? That God should make first, with Abraham, a covenant of grace, and after some lapse of time, a covenant of works! That God should give himself, the full enjoyment of which gift, and promise, could never be realized in this world, but only in heaven, to a covenant of works!! We ask again, was there ever any thing more dignified, more sublime, more glorious, than the establishment of this covenant? It was not done suddenly. Abraham was not hurried into it, but had full time, between the first disclosure of it, and the full and final establishment of it, for the most cool, mature deliberation, and consideration of it. And at the proper time, the majesty of heaven condescended to the establishment of it. How bright, and how glorious was the transaction. There was no terror, like the thunders on Sinai, but the utmost deliberation. And truly, O my soul, no language can describe, the blessedness here granted and secured. No heart can conceive it. Heaven can offer no more. It is God himself! And is it because the blessedness, the glory, and the splendor of it, dazzles the sight of some, that they think it only a covenant of works?

We repeat, the essence of the covenant established, with Abraham, we find in these words, Gen. 17, 7: "And I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, in their generations." This is the great promise of God's everlasting covenant. Speaking of gospel times, and of the gospel church, by the prophet Jeremiah 31, 33, God says: "And I will be their God, and they shall be my people." This is quoted and applied to the gospel church, Heb. 8, 10: "And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." And again, this also forms the climax, and constitutes the sum of

all the blessedness of heaven. Rev. 21, 7: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

And if God gave the land of Canaan, as a type of heaven, and a pledge of his faithfulness to perform the infinitely more glorious things covenanted to his people, so now under the gospel we are assured that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having *promise* of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." But while the promise, concerning the life that now is, secures blessings which are temporal and momentary, the promise concerning the life to come, viz: that God will be our God, secures blessings and blessedness durable as eternity, and infinitely incomprehensible. It is then evident, that all objections against the covenant made with Abraham, and to its gracious provisions for the believer, and his seed, if viewed in the light of truth and candor, vanish into *nothing*, and are lighter than the smallest dust of the balance. If, then, not another word should be said in support of infant baptism, it is to be retained as a blessing of high importance. It is God's institution, and man cannot reverse it. The scheme of our opponents is visionary, rotten at the foundation, and of course the superstructure must fall and crumble into nothing. They may as well overturn Mount Zion itself, as to undermine and overturn this covenant.

Again: Another case which exemplifies God's covenant dealing with families, was the baptism of the Israelites at the Red Sea. This transaction, it is true, Moses has not recorded. This omission, however, does not militate against the fact, because other writers have given us sufficient information concerning it. Moses does not record the fact that Enoch was a prophet, and prophesied of the day of judgment, but Jude does. Moses does not record the fact that Noah was a preacher of righteousness, but Peter does. Moses does not record the fact that Abel offered sacrifice by faith in Jesus Christ; nor that by faith they kept the passover and the sprinkling of blood; nor that by faith they passed through the red sea, and were all baptized unto him, in the cloud and in the sea—but all these facts are recorded by St. Paul, and upon the credibility of these writers, these facts are as well substantiated, as if Moses himself had recorded them. 1st Cor. 10, 1: "Moreover, brethren, I would not have you ig-



norant, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all *baptized* unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." It was now a matter of importance, that this transaction should be recorded in the sacred scriptures, for the benefit of the christian church, and especially for the Gentiles. There was, it seems, a covenant transaction, between God and his people, by which *they* were renewedly laid under an obligation to receive the doctrines and obey the precepts which God was about to deliver to them, by Moses his minister : And on God's part, sanctioned and ratified, by his furnishing and applying water from the miraculous cloud which overshadowed them, and by other tokens, that he took them for his peculiar people. This seems to be the fair interpretation of the words before quoted, especially when we take into consideration what other scriptures say, in allusion to this transaction, and also the peculiar circumstances of the case. Judges 5, 4 : "The cloud dropped down water." Psalm 77, 17 : "The cloud poured out water." They speak of this, not as an adventitious circumstance, but with an emphasis expressive of the whole transaction of their being baptized.

As they were now leaving the land of heathens, polluted with the most gross and abominable idolatries, God would solemnly purify them, and bring them into a state of higher relative holiness, and nearer communion with himself, by a general and universal renewal of the covenant ; and with a ceremony equal to the importance and dignity of such a measure. They were baptized *unto* Moses, or as some bibles read *into* Moses. It is the same original word as in Rom. 6, 3, where we are said to be baptized *into* Christ Jesus. To be baptized *into* Moses cannot mean any thing less than that they were baptized into a renewal of their obligation to believe the doctrines and obey the commands which God by Moses, was about to deliver them. But, be this transaction what it would, here was a *baptism*, and the *children* were certainly comprehended, and baptized, as well as their parents. Three times the apostle uses the universal term *All*. *All* were under the cloud. *All* passed through the sea. *All* were baptized, &c. This includes the young, as well as the old—the infants in their parents arms, as well as the parents themselves. This, also, was done by faith in Christ, Heb.



11, 29—and for an example unto us, 1st Corin. 10, 6.

Again : We will notice one more great covenant transaction, and close this section. The whole congregation were assembled together on the plains of Moab, Deut. 29, 10 : “Ye stand this day all of you, before the Lord your God. Your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel. Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger (proselyte) that is within thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood, to the drawer of thy water, that thou shouldest enter into covenant, with the Lord thy God, and into his oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day.” Here, also, mention is made of the little ones ; none were too little to enter into covenant with God. Also, the stranger, that is the proselyte, from the hewer of their wood, to the drawer of their water, and of course *their* little ones also. All were included.

Thus, it appears, that for the space of four thousand years ; that is, from the fall of our first parents to the death of Christ, the children were included in God’s gracious covenant.

Our first position, then, is thus far proved to be good, viz : that the covenant of grace, as to its visibility and manifestation, is established on the same basis as the law and covenant of nature, and runs parallel with it. Infants were thus far included, with their parents, in the covenant, and with them enjoyed covenant privileges and blessings. God has decided that they are capable of being in *covenant* with him, of receiving blessing from him, and are the proper subjects of the seal of the righteousness of faith.

That we may enable our readers to form a just comparison between our sentiments, and those of our opponents, concerning the covenant made with Abraham, we will quote a few sentences from some of their most eminent authors. Dr. Gill : “It seems rather to be a covenant of works than of grace.” After a few more remarks, he says again : “All which savor nothing of a covenant of grace ; a covenant by which we can have a grounded hope of salvation, but the contrary.”

Mr. Booth, in his essays on the kingdom of Christ, page 32, [New-Haven Edition :] “Jehovah acknowledged all those for his people, and himself as their God, who performed an external obedience to his commands, even though in their hearts disaffected to him.”

Page 39 : "Health, long life, riches, honours, and victory over their enemies, were promised by Jehovah to their external obedience."

Page 104 : "To reason from the constitution, (covenant made with Abraham,) the laws, the government, the privileges and rites of the Jewish, to those of the Christian church, is to adopt a capital principle of Papal depravity, and grossly to corrupt our holy religion."

Page 131 : "Many things in the Jewish ritual were pretty well adapted to please the carnally minded."

Mr. Merrill. Page 61 : "Are Old Testament rites to explain to us New Testament ordinances ? Is it so ? Is Moses to correct what Christ has left incomplete ? Will it be safe for us continually to forsake the commandments of Christ for the precepts of men."

Page 73 : "Shall we go to the law and covenant of circumcision to prove infant baptism, when both this law and covenant have long since waxed old, been repealed, and have perished ?"

Page 79 : "We ought, however, to trace the history of infant baptism, one step further, and notice Calvin, and a multitude of others, who were unwilling to acknowledge their independence (willing to acknowledge their dependence) on the mother of harlots for their authority in this matter ; and therefore, with great ingenuity, have discovered infant baptism as a gospel ordinance, or the right of infants to it in the law of Moses."

Page 83 : "When Ministers transcribe out of the Old into the New edition of God's word and will, tell us that the rite and covenant of circumcision are to explain to us the observance of a New Testament ordinance, we are not obliged to believe them."

But let us hear the voice of inspiration. God required supreme love. Deut. 6 : "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." 30, 6 : "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." God required the heart, all the heart, and any thing short of the heart and all the heart was an abomination unto him. Psalm 50, 16 : "Unto the wicked God saith,

“What hast thou to do, to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?” God also required of them *faith* in Jesus Christ, as well as love to him. “Abraham (Gal. 3, 6,) believed God, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness.” The apostle tells us (Heb. 11, 23, and onward,) that by *faith* Moses was hid three months; by *faith* they forsook Egypt; by *faith* they kept the pass-over and the sprinkling of blood; by *faith* they passed through the red sea; by *faith* the walls of Jericho fell down; by *faith* the victories of Joshua, of Barak, of Gideon, of Samson, of Jephtha, of Samuel, of David, and of others, were obtained.—By *faith* they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.” God required, truly, that external obedience, which was the fruit of faith and love; but he did not give those blessings, even for that; they were of his mere sovereign grace. Deut. 9, 5: “Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess the land, but that the Lord may perform the word which he sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” Their blessings, and highly exalted, gracious privileges, are summed up, Deut. 4, 7: “What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is, in all that we call upon him for? And what nation is so great, that hath judgments and statutes so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” That church was a spiritual building. Christ was the foundation. The head stone of the corner, brought forth with shoutings, crying; Grace, grace unto it. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.” Psalm 118, 22; Zec. 4, 7. And again, God saith, Psalm 132, 13: “For the Lord hath chosen Zion: He hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with salvation; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.”

We say, then, is not the scheme of our opponents most glaringly absurd, wild, visionary and strange! According to their views and belief, the most *glorious inheritance* ever bequeathed to mortals, or which the blessed God himself could bestow, viz: the church of God, with instituted rites, seals, ordinances, types, and symbols, pointing immediately to Christ



the object of their faith, and heaven as the true land of promise, in every respect, by the express order and direction of God himself. Yes, the church of the living God, not only the birth-place of saints, but where God himself was present in the nearest and highest acts of communion ; and where were the brightest displays of his glory, is said by them to be only a covenant of works—a covenant which gives not a grounded hope of salvation, but the contrary ! That health, long life, riches, honours and victory, over their enemies, was promised to their external obedience, even though in their hearts, they were disaffected to God ; that God gave them a ritual service, pretty well adapted to please the carnally minded ; that to reason from that covenant, or any of the rites and privileges of that church is to adopt a capital principle of Papal depravity, and grossly to corrupt our holy religion ; and that, whatever we take from the scriptures of the Old Testament, is only the precepts of men ; that Calvin, the great reformer was, and all who practice infant baptism, are willing to acknowledge their dependance on the mother of harlots. Reader, pause, reflect back, and stand astonished ! This step, they are constrained to take, or else their whole scheme of the denial of infant baptism falls to the ground.

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## SECTION VII.

### TESTIMONY OF THE PROPHECIES.

Do the prophecies, which speak of the New Testament dispensation, in the least degree countenance the idea, that children will be rejected, and form no part of the visible church ? Or, do they clearly predict, that the standing of children will be the same as in all former dispensations ? If prophecy *rejects* them, it settles the question ; no more can be said. But if prophecy is in their favor, it is an addition of light to light, and confirms their present standing. It will be unnecessary to bring into view all the prophecies which might be adduced. We shall only notice a few, concerning families, and concerning nations, where children must certainly be in-

cluded ; and somewhere children, seed and offspring, are expressly mentioned.

Gen. 12, 3 : "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." 26, 4 : "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." 28, 14 : "And in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." These are not only precious *promises*, but important prophecies, and are quoted by the apostles, with little variation in words, but none in sense and meaning, and are quoted as having their full accomplishment under the gospel. Acts 3, 25 : "In thy seed, shall all kindreds of the earth be blessed." Gal. 3, 8 : "In thee shall all nations be blessed." The terms families, kindreds and nations, are used synonymously and promiscuously. And these prophecies can not be understood in any other light, than placing Gentile families, kindred and nations, as to spiritual things, in the same standing in the covenant of grace, as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Again : God says, Jer. 31, 1 : "I will be the God of all the *families* of Israel." God has ever revealed himself the God of families ; and this promise, as well as the others just quoted, is spoken, as much concerning his *gospel Israel*, as concerning his ancient people. So Peter declares, when he urges baptism. Acts 2, 39 : "For the promise is unto you and your children." God's promise is made to families.

Again : Isaiah 52, 15 : "So shall *he* sprinkle many nations." That the term *he* refers to Christ, and the action here ascribed to him, relates to the New Testament dispensation, is clear from the context. The obvious meaning of the *term* sprinkle, according to the analogy of scripture, is, to purify, consecrate, and set apart for God. When the prophecy was delivered, but one nation, viz : the Jews, were sprinkled, except the proselytes. But, under the gospel, the benefit must be extended to many nations. Infants, when the prophecy was delivered, were included, with their parents, in covenant privileges ; and now, when the prophecy is accomplished under the gospel, can not be excluded from them.—The law of nature, which is the law of God, and the analogy of all divine dispensations, that God ever gave to man, forbid the thought of such exclusion. It is unsupported by any, even pretended divine warrant, and is consequently inadmissible. It unavoidably follows, that *baptism*, the christian sprink-

ling, is here alluded to ; and the spirit of the living God in this, as well as in other passages, in strong, prophetic language, sanctions the practice of pedobaptism ; and the same strong prophetic language is often found elsewhere. Isaiah 55, 5 : "Behold thou (the church) shalt call a nation that thou knewest not ; and nations, that knew not thee, shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God." Micah 4, 2 : "And *many nations* shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord." Zech. 2, 11 : "And many nations shall be joined unto the Lord, in that day, and shall be my people." The positive declaration from the lips of Christ himself, concerning his kingdom, corresponds with the foregoing. Mat. 21, 43 : "Therefore, I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Here, our Lord speaks of the kingdom of God, the visible church being taken from one nation, (the Jews,) and given to another nation—given to a *nation*, as well as taken from a *nation*. It was not abolished, but transferred from one nation to another nation. And the national aspect of the former, so far at least as to include the children, with the parents, is the subject of the transfer.—That is, if the visible membership of infants, was an essential part of spiritual privileges enjoyed by the Jews, and taken from them, the same also was given to the other nation ; but the former is true, as we *know*, so is the *latter*, as we *cannot deny*.

Will any object and say, The word *nations* is used, only to signify some of all nations, who shall profess their faith and repentance ? This will not relieve them, because, in the passages before cited, the words *nations* and *families* are certainly used synonymously, which latter can not be understood, to the exclusion of children, neither can the former. Certainly, nothing less is to be understood by the before cited passages, than vast accessions of proselytes, which always included the children with their parents.

Do any object further, and say, that God *now* requires to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, I ask them, when it was that God did not so require to be worshipped ?

Will any say that a person can not be brought under a moral obligation, except he first give his own consent, which children can not do ; and because they can not act voluntarily,



they can not be brought under the obligations of the covenant ; and therefore can not be received ; and if they are received, they are under no obligation, when they come to mature years, on account of what their parents did for them when they were infants ? Such an objection is both weak and unfounded. Every person is bound to obey the laws of his country, whether he has consented to them or not. The contrary would overthrow the governments of all nations. Every child is bound to obey his parents, whether he consents to their government or not. Obstinacy, non-consent, and wilful opposition, can not release him from his obligation. And with regard to covenant obligation, God has decided, that infants are capable of it, and all such objections lie immediately against *God*, and are an impeachment of his wisdom, and the propriety of his instituting, the covenant standing of infants, in his church. The main ground of difficulty is, men are not willing to be under obligation to do, what is right and good in the eyes of the Lord. All such objections are not only weak and wicked, but go much further to corroborate and strengthen, than to weaken the arguments in favor of infant church membership.

God says, Ezek. 20, 37 : "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the *bond* of the covenant." That is, by the rod of my providence, and by the sanctifying influences of my spirit, I will cause you to feel the obligation of the covenant, and its requirements. And then, I will be to you a God in covenant, and ye shall be to me a people in covenant. Ye shall be heirs of the promises, and of the rich inheritance thereof. There is, then, a *bond* of covenant : the people, who enjoy its blessings, must feel its obligation, and conform to its requirements. God is the author of it ; and who art thou, O man, that repliest against God ? His will alone must decide.

The reader will now be presented with a few, out of many passages from the prophets, where the children are expressly mentioned. Psalm 102, 28 : "The *children* of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee." The connection refers to Christ. The servants spoken of are his servants, and their seed, without excluding the smallest infant, shall be established before him. Isaiah 40, 11 : "He (Christ) shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather

the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Christ is here represented under the gospel dispensation, by the figure of a shepherd. So he is styled (Psalm 80, 1,) "'The shepherd of Israel." John 10, 11: "The good shepherd." He takes care for a succession in his flock, the same care as the shepherd for the lambs. He gathers them with his arm, and carries them in his bosom, the church. He says to Peter, (John 21, 15,) "Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs." Wonderful expressions! He takes the same care for the lambs as he does for the sheep! Again, (49, 22,) "Thus saith the Lord God, behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up a standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." Here the Gentiles are represented as coming by *families* or households, and the children which they shall bring in their arms, and on their shoulders, shall be the children of the church, *thy sons and thy daughters*. Jer. 30, 9: "But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, (Christ) whom I will raise up unto them." Verse 20: "Their *children* also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me." We see, in these prophecies, which clearly point to the gospel dispensation, that children, seed, offspring, sons, daughters, lambs, &c. are inseparably connected with their parents, in the enjoyment of covenant privileges and blessings. And whatever privileges and blessings, *children, seed and offspring* enjoyed under the former dispensations, it is here foretold they shall enjoy under the gospel. Other prophecies might be adduced, but these are abundantly sufficient.

Now, prophecies are the declaration of God, concerning what shall, and *must* take place, that in the fulfilment of them, all may know the truth of him, by whose spirit they were dictated. There is a *must* in this case. God's veracity stands pledged for their full accomplishment. What he hath spoken can not fail to take place. To suppose otherwise would be the greatest absurdity imaginable. To this end Jesus *must* be born in Bethlehem. Mat. 2, 5: "For thus it is written." Micah 5, 2, "He must go into Egypt, and for a while stay there, because God had said, 'out of Egypt have I called my son.'" Mat. 2, 15; Hosea 11, 1: So also,



on his return, he must turn aside and dwell in a city called Nazareth, because there was a prediction of him that he should be called a Nazarine. And even the prediction by Jeremiah, concerning the mourning of the mothers in Israel for the loss of their children by Herod, *must* have its accomplishment. Mat. 2, 17; Jer. 31, 15. Heaven and earth may sooner pass away, than the least portion of God's predictions ever fail. In what light the apostles viewed this subject, we learn from two particular instances. When they could no longer preach the gospel to the Jews, they said, (Acts 13, 46,) "Seeing ye put it far from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo we turn to the Gentiles, for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be, for salvation to the ends of the earth." A prophetic promise or prediction they considered the same as a *command* from the Lord. The other instance is the saying of Peter, second epistle, 1, 19: "We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." He had just been speaking concerning the voice which came down from heaven concerning Christ saying, this is my beloved Son. But prophecy, he says, is a word more sure than that. "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Yes, heaven and earth may pass away, but God's predictions can never fail.

Thus far we have considered the several former dispensations of the covenant of grace, in all of which we find children connected with their parents. We have also briefly considered the prophecies concerning their standing, under the gospel dispensation. The evidence in their favor is clear, decided, unequivocal, and incontrovertible. Baptists, however, instead of meeting this evidence with fair and candid arguments, endeavor, by a flat denial, to sweep away the whole at one stroke. Mr. Robinson, a distinguished Baptist writer, in his book, entitled a "History of Baptism," says, (page 514,) "In churches unconnected with civil power, and where infant baptism rests on argument alone, there are three or six classes of arguments, which the Baptists reject, and three more which they receive when they are properly explained. *Arguments* taken from philosophy, make no impression with



them ; for they say baptism is not a part of natural religion, but a positive institute of revelation." By philosophy and natural religion, it is supposed he means the law and covenant of nature, which we considered in the first section of this work. He proceeds : " To all arguments taken from the Old Testament, they (the Baptists) reply, The economy was not given to them but to the Jews, and it is, as it ought to be, abolished to the Jews, and references to it, in the New Testament do not establish it." The covenant, as revealed to our first parents, as exhibited to, and established with Noah, as established with Abraham, and all the great and precious promises are comprehended in what he says Baptists deny ; insinuating that every thing in the Old Testament is of the same nature as the ceremonies, which were typical of Christ and abolished. He proceeds : " To all arguments taken from the *New Testament*, subsequent to the four gospels, some (Baptists) say they are admissible only as explanatory of the doctrine of Jesus ; and all say the passages that speak of baptism at all, explain it wholly in their favor." That is, all arguments taken from the book of Acts and from the epistles, some Baptists say they are admissible, not to prove infant baptism, but only as explanatory of the doctrine of Jesus. This is a vague expression ; and all say, " that the passages that speak of baptism at all, speak of it wholly in their favor." They say so ! A most pitiful subterfuge ! But he proceeds : " Arguments taken from the proselyte baptism of the Jews, and the initiatory ablutions of Pagans they wholly disallow, because in regard to the first, the fact can not be proved, and in regard to both, not the traditions of the synagogues, or the superstition of Pagan temples, but the *gospel alone* is their rule of action." Here again is a weak attempt at art and sophistry, in endeavoring to confound the proselyte baptism with Pagan ceremonies, and to smother the arguments drawn from the former with the superstitions of the latter, when there is no more connexion between them, than between Christ and Belial. " The gospel alone," says he, that is the four evangelists, " is their only rule of action." This is no better than yielding the point at issue. If they admit arguments from the law or covenant of nature, from the various *dispensations* of the covenant of grace, which not only admitted, but *positively required* the membership of infants ; if they ad-

mit the authority and truth of the prophecies ; if they admit arguments from many passages in the Acts of the apostles, and if they admit arguments drawn from many passages in the Epistles, their *cause is ruined*. This is the corner into which they are driven ! A most pitiful escape from difficulties which beset them on every side ; difficulties which they can never remove. And now, reader, are you prepared to go this length ? If so, you are within a hair's breadth of the grossest error and infidelity. The gospel alone, *they say*, is their only rule of action, and deny all arguments from other parts of the bible—Old Testament or New. What Mr. Booth, Merrill and other Baptist writers say on the same subject, amounts to the same as what Mr. Robinson says.

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## SECTION VIII.

### JOHN'S BAPTISM.

That John's ministry was under the former dispensation, is evident from the following considerations : It was foretold (Isaiah 40, 3 ; Malachi 5, 5,) that he should come near the close of that dispensation, to prepare the way, and make ready a people prepared for the advent of the Messiah. Accordingly John proclaimed (Mat. 3, 2,) "Repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand." The gospel state of the church was hastening on ; its approach was near, but it had not then commenced. So, also, Jesus himself was under the same dispensation, and he was after John. He might not enter on his ministry, until he was thirty years of age, as the law of that dispensation required. Numb. 4, 3 ; Luke 3, 23. He was as capable at twelve years as at thirty, but the law of that dispensation, which required thirty of all others, made no exception even for the Saviour himself.

Further, during his ministry the Saviour observed the instituted synagogue worship, scrupulously kept every passover, and enjoined upon those whom he healed, a compliance with the law of ceremonies. "Go, said he, shew yourselves to the priest, and offer those things which Moses commanded."

Mark 1, 44 ; Luke 5, 14. So, also, nothing can be more explicit than the words of the apostle, Heb. 9, 15 : " He is the mediator of the New Testament. For where a testament is, there *must* of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are *dead* : otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." The gospel truths, essential to salvation, were preached from the beginning, through every dispensation, but the gospel *state* of the church, which is emphatically called the gospel dispensation, could not commence until the death of Christ ; neither could the other have an end, because the types must continue until the offering of the antitype. *Again*, John was *regularly* descended from Aaron, in whose line a succession of the priesthood must continue until the death of Christ.

The point being settled that John's ministry was under the former dispensation, we proceed to consider his *baptism*. In some respects John's baptism and the christian baptism are similar, and do agree, yet in other respects they were so essentially different and dissimilar as clearly to prove they were not the same. Both agree in laying the subjects under an obligation to repent and obey the truth. Both agree in exhibiting the remission of sins, and probably with regard to the subjects, and the mode of baptism ; yet in many other respects, there was an essential difference, which shews plainly enough that as they were not under the same dispensation, so they were very far from being the same rite or ordinance. John was, as we hinted just now, regularly descended from Aaron, (Luke 1, 1,) and of course regularly introduced into the ministry, at the age of thirty years ; his baptism therefore was a part of his official duty, and as other rites and ceremonies, was of divine appointment. At what time, however, the officers of the Jewish church were first authorized to administer this rite is uncertain. It was doubtless very ancient. But the christian baptism was, immediately, from Christ himself, after his resurrection. This was the commencement of the new dispensation or the gospel *state* of the church.

John *used* no *prescript form* of words ; but the apostles were commanded to baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is essential to christian baptism.

John received no authority from Christ. When he began



his ministry he was a stranger to him, and did not even know him. Previous to his ministry, John resided in the wilderness of Judea, and Jesus in Nazareth, an obscure town in Galilee. The two places were far remote from each other, and until Jesus came to be baptized, which was six months after John had commenced his ministry, he was personally unknown to the baptist. These are John's own words, John 1, 31, "And I knew him not." They were entire strangers. It is then certain that John received no official authority from Christ, but performed the duties of his office both in preaching and in baptizing, according to the then well known usages, and long established customs of the Jewish church. Hence *John's baptism* could not be the christian baptism. But was not John sent of God? Does he not say, John 1, 32, "He that sent me to baptize," &c. ? Truly he does. But all the former prophets were sent also, Jer. 7, 25, "I sent unto you all my servants the prophets." This does not, however, imply that they were sent to declare new truths, or administer newly instituted *rites*, but that they were regularly introduced, acted under divine authority, and by divine direction. It was the same with John, and with every true minister under the gospel.

Again : Those whom John baptized were members of the Jewish church, and of this church John himself lived and died a member. But those whom the apostles baptized, after being commissioned by the risen Saviour, were members of the gospel church, under the new dispensation.

Again : John's baptism was soon to cease, and become extinct ; but the christian baptism, which was to succeed it, *must* continue. John himself very well understood this, and said of Christ, John 3, 30 : "He must increase, but I must decrease." In about a year from that time he was cast into prison, and all the glory of that dispensation began rapidly to decline.

Once more : Those whom John baptized, could not be received into the christian church, without christian baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 19, 5. Other differences might be mentioned, but these are sufficient.

Now there were in the Jewish church divers purifications, or cleansings. Heb. 9, 10 : "Divers washings," Greek *diaphorais baptismois*, divers baptisms, and according to

John 3, 25, purifications. John's baptism, therefore, could be no other, than a ceremonial cleansing, or purification.

Ancient writers, and the most able commentators tell us, that baptism had been in use, in the Jewish church, long before John, and was what the Jews very well understood.

Mr. HENRY, on Mat. 3, 6, says: "It was usual with the Jews to baptize those whom they admitted proselytes to their religion."

Dr. WHITBY, on Mat. 28, 19, says: "It being also evident, that our Lord chose that baptism, for the admission of all persons into his new covenant and church, by which their proselytes were cleansed, and fitted to enter into the Jewish church." Again, speaking of baptism, he says: "And since it concerned a rite of common use, in their church, and by which they cleansed the *infants* of all those who came into covenant with God, applying to them that same *rite*, by which their parents were fitted to enter into covenant, our Lord in his institution expressed no dislike of that way." In other words, our Lord took *baptism*, as to the mode and subjects, as it had been long used, and well known.

From the New Cyclopædia of Arts and Sciences; we extract, from under the word baptism, the following: "Soon after the time of our Saviour, we find it to have been the custom of the Jews solemnly to baptize their proselytes. As their writers treat largely of the reasons for this rite, and give no hint of its being a *novel institution*, it is probable it had always been the custom antecedent to Moses." Again: "Mr. Wall has made it highly probable, to say the least, from many testimonies of the Jewish writers, who, without one dissenting voice, *allow the fact*, that the practice of *Jewish baptism* obtained before, and at, as well as after our Saviour's time." Again: "The testimonies of the Jewish writers are of the greater weight, because the practice reported by them to have been of so ancient a date did still remain among them." Now, these writers of the Cyclopædia, were able men, and could have no motive in the least degree to vary from matter of fact. Their statement is worthy of confidence. We cannot reasonably doubt it. Mr. Henry says again: "They (the apostles) readily apprehended baptism to be fitly, and properly used, as a sacred rite, or ceremony; for the Jewish church had used it with circumcision in the admission of



proselytes." Mr. Elwood, in his sacred history, speaking of John and his baptism, says : " Baptism was no new thing to the Jews. It had of long time been in use among them, for the admission of proselytes, who came to them from the Gentiles, or heathen nations."

Dr. CLARK, on Mat. 28, 19, says : " The apostles well knew that the Jews, not only circumcised the children of proselytes, but also baptized them ; and as they now received commission to teach and proselyte all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Holy Trinity, they must necessarily understand that infants were included." Again : " That the children, and even the infants of proselytes were baptized among the Jews, and in consequence reputed clean, and partakers of the blessings of the covenant. See proved at large by Wetstein, in his note on Mat. 3, 16." Such is the testimony of the most credible writers on this subject. And if, according to them, the female children of proselytes were received by baptism, it is certainly a fair conclusion, that the practice was in conformity to the manner of receiving the female infants of Jews ; that as one law was to both, the females of both were always received by *baptism*. And this idea is strengthened by the consideration, that according to the before-mentioned writers, *baptism* was in use among the Jews, antecedent to Moses, and therefore it was before the law to receive proselytes, which, as we have before shewn was, Exodus 12, 48. With regard to covenant standing, one law was to the home-born, and to the stranger.

That the female children of Jews were in covenant, and members of the church, as fully as the males, is evident from the whole current of scripture testimony. They were comprehended in the term seed, to whom the promises were made, were entitled to eat of the passover ; and it is no objection against the before-mentioned conclusion that they were baptized, because the particular ceremony of their initiation is not mentioned. Many other things, which were omitted to be mentioned in the Old Testament, are mentioned in the New. It is no where mentioned in the Old Testament, that Michael, the arch-angel, when contending with the devil, disputed about the body of Moses ; nor, that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, was a prophet, and prophesied of the day of judgment, how Christ should come with ten thousand of his



saints, &c. ; nor, that the whole host of Israel were baptized, in the cloud and in the sea ; nor, that the name of a child was solemnly called in the ordinance of circumcision, and could not be altered afterwards ; nor, that in the sacrament of the passover, a *cup* was used similar to the cup which is now used in the sacred Supper. Inasmuch then, as credible writers of antiquity, without the least doubt or hesitation, declare in favor of the before-mentioned fact, that baptism was in use as already stated, we have the fullest reason to believe it, though no express mention is made of it, in any part of the bible.

Some passages, however, in the New Testament, seem plainly to allude to such a custom. When the Jews sent priests and Levites to John, to ask him who he was, and demanded of him, if he were not the Christ, nor Elias, why he baptized, it supposes that baptism was no new institution. Because (and they were learned men) they do not enquire about the nature or intent of baptism ; this they well understood ; but their whole enquiry was about his authority to administer it. If he were the Christ, or Elias, the thing was well ; he had a right to do it : But if he were not one of those, their question was a challenge of his authority to perform that service. This conversation most clearly conveys the idea, that baptism was not a new rite, or ceremony. The people well understood it, and understood who might, and who might not administer it.

Gal. 3, 28 : "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female."—That is, there was a distinction or difference in the manner of receiving all these ; but, under the present dispensation, there was none. Under the former dispensation, the Jews had the pre-eminence, being the natural seed, the home-born, the natural branches of the good olive tree. The Gentiles, were received by the law of proselytism, the bond according to the provision made for servants. Both Jews and proselytes, males were received by circumcision, females by baptism. But under the gospel, all are received by baptism. There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female. That is, there is no distinction, as there was once, in the manner of their being received. There was a difference between male and female. The female proselytes were re-

ceived into covenant by baptism. The fair conclusion then seems to be, as there was one law both to Jews and proselytes, that it was from the beginning the custom of receiving female Jews by baptism, and that the proselytes both *male* and *female*, were also received into covenant, by rites, ceremonies and seals, in conformity to the manner of receiving the male and female children of Jews ; but under the gospel *all* were received alike, viz : by baptism.

We now return to John's baptism, or purification : And, upon the enquiry, whether children and infants, as well as adults, were the subjects of it, we ask, What was the *constitution* of the Jewish church ? The answer is, The children shared the same rites as their parents. With their parents, they were unavoidably subject to *ceremonial pollutions*, and of course were entitled to the *same cleansings*. Whatever, then, was the nature of John's cleansing or purifying *rîte*, we may safely infer the children's privilege in it, not only from the constitution of the Jewish church, but from the express description of John's mission, which was, (Malachi 4, 6,) "To turn the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the heart of the children unto the fathers." That is, his doctrine and his baptism was designed to have this effect. To make a separation, taking the parents and leaving the children, would be inconsistent, both with the constitution of the Jewish church, and the express design of John's mission. And, because children are not mentioned, that is no objection. Women are not mentioned, and are we to suppose there were no women baptized by John ? Mat. 3, 5 : "Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan ; and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Great multitudes of all sorts of people, from the city and from all parts of the country, came in crowds to his baptism, which certainly conveys the idea that they came by families or households, and that women and children, as well as men, were the subjects of his baptism.

An objection, however, is brought, that they who were baptized, *confessed* their sins, which children, and especially infants, could not do. This, it seems, was a general confession, and was no more than God required on other occasions, and was on other occasions complied with. Levit. 26, 40 : "If they shall *confess* their iniquity, with the iniquity of their



fathers, with their trespasses, which they have trespassed against me, and also that they have walked contrary to me ; and that I also have walked contrary to them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies. If, then, their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they accept the punishment of their iniquity, then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and my covenant with Isaac, and my covenant with Abraham will I remember, and I will remember the land." On this confession, both parents and children together might be restored to divine favor. Solomon, in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, says the same. 1st Kings, 8, 47 : " Yet, if they shall bethink themselves in the land, whither they were carried captive, and repent and make supplication, saying, We have sinned and done perversely, and have committed wickedness," &c. On this condition they were to be restored. Parents must *confess*, but all would be restored, children and infants, as well as adults. So Nehemiah 9, 2 : " And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God ; and the seed of Israel separated themselves, from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins," &c. When upon such confession, parents were restored to favor, their children were restored with them. Now, in these reformatations, and the one at the preaching of John, the conditions and the benefits were the same. In the former, God would *remember his covenant*, in which infants were included ; and, as far as they were capable, partook of the same benefits and blessings with their parents, and with them were restored to covenant standing ; so also under John's ministry, if it was a benefit to parents to receive the purifying *rite*, it must be also to their children.

When we consider further, that the ordinance itself, does not exclude infants any more than adults ; that the covenant of God required the infant seed of believers, that God would not receive the parents, and grant them covenant blessings, without their children ; that the uniform practice of the Jewish church, of which John, and those whom he baptized, were members, was to receive infants with their parents ; and, when we consider further, how short the account of John's ministry is, and that one special part of his business was " to turn the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the hearts of the children unto the fathers," lest the earth should be



smitten with a curse, the conclusion is certainly fair, that children, and infants with their parents, shared the benefit of John's baptismal purification.

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## SECTION IX.

### CHRIST'S COMMISSION TO BAPTIZE.

The commission to baptize, is thus recorded, Mat. 28, 19, 20 : "Go ye, therefore, and *matheteusate* ; teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, *didaskontes* ; teaching them, to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Amen."

President Dickinson, whose learning and piety no one can reasonably call in question, says : "Here are two words in the original, of distinct and separate meaning, one translated teach, and the other teaching ; the former of which, properly signifies, to disciple or proselyte, and the latter to indoc-trinate." Dr. Dodridge, paraphrases it thus : "Go forth, therefore, and proselyte all nations." Other learned men, and frequently the ancient Fathers, expound the words in the same way. Here, also, the expression, "all nations," seems to be an antithesis to one nation, the Jews, and the plain meaning is, "Go ye. and carry covenant blessings to all the Gentiles, to the same extent, as they have been enjoyed by the Jews, using baptism as the seal of the covenant, instead of circumcision. From the time of Moses, proselytes had been received by circumcision ; but now the Saviour commands, that they be received by baptism. Again : The commission, as recorded by Mark 16, 16, is in fewer words still, and if possible more comprehensive : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." "Preach the gospel to every creature." In other words, Proclaim in all the world, the gospel kingdom, or church state, which contains blessings exhibited to every individual of the human race.

Our brethren say, *believing* in this commission, stands before baptizing, and is therefore required to be first. Children have not faith, and therefore, they may not be baptized. In reply to this, we say, believing is not always set first. John 3, 5 : "Except a man (*'tis* any one,) be born of the water, and of the spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." To be born of the water, all agree is to be baptized, which is here set before being born of the spirit. 1st Tim. 3, 5 : "He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Here, again, the washing of regeneration, all agree, is baptism, and is set before the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Two things we undertake here to affirm : The *first* is, that the Saviour required nothing as a condition which had not always been required.

The *second* is, that he did not alter the covenant standing of children.

*First*, then : When the Saviour required Faith, he required nothing new. Faith, from the beginning, had ever been required of adults ; but from the beginning had *never* been required of infants, neither did the Saviour require it now.

Sacrifices must be offered, by faith in Christ, or else they were not acceptable to God. Heb. 11, 4 : "By faith Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, God testifying of his gifts." Therefore, saith the apostle, "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and goes on to say, verse 7th, "By faith, Noah being warned of God, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." And the apostle Peter, 1st Epistle, 3, 21, says, "By the like figure, whereunto *baptism* doth save us." Noah was the head of the family, and faith was required of him ; but the family entered in, and were saved from the flood upon his faith ; and so the children of believing parents may receive baptism, and become members of the visible church, and enjoy the means of salvation.

Faith was required of Abraham, that the covenant might be established with him, and he receive the seal of it ; but faith was not required of his seed, and yet they must receive the seal ; and God promised to be their God, and circumcise their hearts. Deut. 30, 6. It was the same, with the adult proselytes, faith was required of them, but their children must receive the seal. Faith was not required of them. Exod.

12, 48. Faith was required of adults, to keep the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, as a family token, that they were the Lord's people, but it was not required of their children. Heb 11, 28. Faith was required of adults, when they passed the Red Sea, (Heb. 11, 29,) but faith was not required of their children. The want of faith excluded many of the adult Jews in the wilderness from entering into the land of promise. Heb. 4, 12. But it did not exclude their children. So faith was always required for covenant standing. Psalm 50, 16 : " But unto the wicked (unbelievers) God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth." And because of unbelief, they were broken off, (Rom. 11, 20,) and the Gentiles, by faith, were grafted in.

We see, then, that from the beginning, faith had *ever* been required of adults, but never of children. If any adults were ever suffered to be in the church, without faith, it was not by license, but by the patience and forbearance of God. But the infants, by his own express authority, were constituted members of his church.

*Secondly* : The Saviour did not alter the covenant relation of children. God's promise was, that he would not only be the *God* of parents, but the God of their *seed* ; that he would circumcise the heart of the *seed*, and that he would pour his spirit on the *seed*. Accordingly, God required that the *seal* of the righteousness of the parent's faith, should be put on the children. He claims them, as his children, which were born unto him. Ezek. 16, 21. This being their standing, it still remains good, unless an order equally explicit has been given and can be produced to set them aside. No such order can be produced. No such order has ever been given. God himself, in language too plain and explicit to be misunderstood, had ordained their standing. You and your *seed*, him that is eight days old, all the families of Israel, &c. If, then, when Christ gave his commission, they were to be rejected, it would have been necessary for him to use terms equally explicit ; such as, you, but not your *seed* ; you, but not him that is eight days old ; you, but not your families or households. We say, in order to exclude them, he must have used terms, equally explicit, as those by which they were constituted members of the church.



It is, then, evidently clear, that Christ delivered his commission, in conformity to the several revealed dispensations of the covenant of grace, which had preceded, in conformity to the prophecies and promises, which speaks expressly of the gospel dispensation, and extend the benefits and blessings of the covenant to families and to the seed of the faithful. Covenant promises, oaths and prophecies, are sure words. Every iota of them must be fulfilled.

Again : Actions, we often say, speak louder than words ; and certainly, actions are a good comment on words. Let then, the Saviour's actions towards little children, be a comment on his commission to baptize them. The notice, which he took of them, shews undeniably clear and plain, how he considered their standing.

He treats the little children in the same manner as he treated his twelve apostles. To the apostles, he said, Mat. 10, 40 : " He that *receiveth* you, receiveth me ; and he that *despiseth* you, despiseth me." And, concerning the children, it is said, Mat. 18, 2, 5 : " And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, " Whoso *receiveth* one such little child, in my name, *receiveth* me." St. Mark relates the same transaction, 9, 36 : " He took a little child, and set him in the midst of them ; and when he had taken him in his arms, he saith unto them, Whoso receiveth one such little child, in my name, receiveth me." If this had not been a little child, in the literal and common acceptation of the word, Jesus could not have taken him in his arms. He requires, then, that little children be received, in his name ; that is, as belonging to him. And, as a further reason, he says, that angels guard them : " For I say unto you, that their angels do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven." And more, Mat. 18, 14 : " Even so, it is not the will of your father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." They are believers by proxy, and are accordingly so treated. All this, Jesus spake expressly, of little children. Wonderful expressions ! Reader, ponder them in thine heart. The infant seed of the faithful belong to Christ—must be received in his name. Angels guard them ! Jesus owns them, and God is their God.

Again : He confers blessings, both on his disciples, and on the little children. It was a high privilege, granted to the Pa-

triarchs, who officiated in their families, as priests of the most high God, to confer blessings. So the highest official duty, of the ministers of the sanctuary, was to confer blessings on God's covenant people. Numb. 6, 22. Christ himself exercised this official power but sparingly. *Once* on the young children, infants, and once on the apostles after he had risen from the dead, and given them direction for the management of his kingdom. Mat. 19, 13: "Then were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray, and the disciples rebuked them, (supposing, it would seem,) that as these children were not sick, that their master ought not at this time to be troubled with them. But Jesus rebuked his disciples, and said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God, and he laid his hands on them and departed." This was the common mode of conferring blessings. St. Mark relates the same transaction, and calls them young children. St. Luke the same, and calls them infants. They who brought them were of course believers, members of the Jewish church, or they would not have brought their children to Christ, seeking blessings for them. Christ approved of their being brought to him, frowned upon his disciples for attempting to hinder them, and declares their standing in the visible kingdom of God. "Of such, said he, is the kingdom of God." Yes, of such little children as these. Of such young children, as St. Mark has it. Of such infants, as St. Luke has it. This phrase, The kingdom of God, and the kingdom of Heaven, usually mean, the visible church. God himself constituted them members of this kingdom, and such had been their standing, from the time of the first promulgation of God's gracious covenant, until the Saviour made this gracious declaration concerning them. St. Mark says, Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them. Gracious Saviour! So he blessed the apostles, Luke 24, 50: "And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifted up his hands and blessed them." In these important particulars, Jesus treated the little children in the same manner as he treated his apostles.

One other thing worthy of notice is this, when Jesus had laid his hands on the little children and blessed them, he departed thence. In this place he had given the people much instruction and had performed a number of miracles, but



when he had thus confirmed the privileges of the lambs of his flock, and had made provision for a succession of subjects in his kingdom, he closed the scene. This was the climax of the present exhibition. "Then he departed thence." We only add here that after his resurrection he gave a special charge concerning them, saying unto Peter, Feed my sheep, Feed my lambs. In his flock Jesus has sheep and he has lambs. If this does not mean parents and children, the meaning and import of the figure is at once destroyed, and the language is at once ridiculous.

Further : As we have before seen, parents are the divinely appointed guardians of their children, their representatives and proxies, to exercise for them that faith which the children are not capable of exercising for themselves. As we have before seen, *faith* from the beginning was ever required of adults, but never of infants, or little children. This idea is illustrated and confirmed by the requirements of the Saviour himself. When he healed adults, he required of them personal faith. He was wont to say, "Be it unto you according to your faith." Mat. 9, 29. "Thy faith hath saved thee." "If thou canst believe," &c. But he did not require faith of children. He was wont to heal children upon the faith of their parents or guardians. He healed the woman's daughter, not upon the faith of the child, but upon the faith of the mother. Mat. 15, 28. Upon the centurion's faith he healed his servant. Luke 7, 9. And the daughter of Jairus a ruler of the Jews, he healed not upon the faith of the child, but upon the faith of Jairus the parent. Mark 5, 7.

Under the form of dispensation, believing parents not only brought their children into covenant by God's commandment, and put the seal of the righteousness of their faith upon them, (Gen. 17, 11 ; Rom. 4, 11,) but by faith in Christ were enabled to bless them or procure blessings for them concerning things to come. Heb. 11, 20. So when infants were brought to Christ, that they might receive a blessing from him, (Luke 18, 14.) they were evidently brought by pious parents who through their faith obtained blessings for their children.

The foregoing facts and others which might be mentioned, if necessary, speak a language not to be misunderstood, and with irresistible force and evidence, shew that no argument from the holy scriptures can be brought to prove against the



right of believers' infants to membership, in the church of Christ, and consequently to baptism, the seal of the righteousness of the parents' faith, and symbol of the operation of God's holy spirit upon their hearts. Their standing in the church, Christ did not alter. Nay, it being fixed by the law and covenant of nature, ratified and confirmed by the law and covenant of God's revealed *will* through every dispensation of his *most* gracious covenant, their standing must of course remain the same to the end of time.

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## SECTION X.

### THE COVENANT PERPETUAL, AND THE CHURCH IN ALL AGES THE SAME.

God said unto Noah, Gen. 6, 18 : " But with thee will I establish my covenant." 9, 9 : " Behold I establish my covenant with you and with your seed after you." 16 : " That I may remember the *everlasting* covenant." Heb. 13, 20 : " Through the blood of the *everlasting* covenant." Such is the unchangeable nature of God's covenant, and such the unequivocal manner of his describing it to us.

It is true that we read, Jer. 31, 31 : " Behold the days shall come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Our brethren say, that the Abrahamic covenant is ended and the gospel dispensation is a new covenant, which excludes children, &c. But in what sense is the gospel dispensation a new covenant ? We say it is not essentially, but only circumstantially *new*. This may be illustrated by another passage, which tells us, that the commandment to love one another is a *new* commandment. The Saviour says,

John 13, 3 : " A *new* commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." 'This same commandment, we read again, 1st John 2, 7, " Was from the beginning." It was the second great command, in the law of Moses, and is as old as the law of nature, yet it is called a new commandment. And why ? Evidently because it is enforced by a new and perfect example, even that of Christ. It is then *not* essentially, only circumstantially *new*. So the covenant of grace, which in reality is as old as the law and covenant of nature, and was first exhibited to our first parents, was at the introduction of the present dispensation, not *essentially*, but only circumstantially *new*. The essential articles are not altered. My brother demands, what is there, strictly speaking, in the gospel dispensation, which is not new ? We say *every thing* which is essential to the covenant of grace is the same as before.

Again : The covenant, of which this takes the place, was not the covenant made with Abraham, but the covenant made when they came out of the land of Egypt, that is, at Sinai. This is elsewhere called a covenant, as Exod. 34, 10 ; 6, 28, but in reality was only a dispensation of God's everlasting covenant, which established the tabernacle worship, the Aaronic priesthood, and the whole typical service. We go on to answer our brother's enquiry. The *new covenant* is made with the same people, the house of Israel, and the house of Judah. In this respect it is not new, but the same as before. Again, in the before mentioned passage, God says, " I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." God writes his law upon the hearts of the heathen, by the light of nature. Rom. 2, 15. But by his written word, his ordinances, and the influences of his spirit, he writes it more legibly on the hearts of his own covenant people. Deut. 30, 6 : " I the Lord thy God, will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, that thou mayest live." Jer. 24, 7 : " I will give them an heart to know me." Ezek. 36, 26 : " A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Again : God says, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. What can be more, than to have God for our God, and that we may be his people ? This was to the patriarchs, to all God's covenant people, is now, and

ever will be a summary of all the blessedness of earth, and heaven. Gen. 17, 7 ; Heb. 11, 16 ; Rev. 21, 3.

Having seen, what, in the gospel covenant, or dispensation is not new, it may be proper to see what is *new*. It is *new* because administered with different modes of service. The seals are *new*. Instead of circumcision, and the passover, we have baptism, and the Lord's supper. It is *new*, because the typical sacrifices are removed, and instead of them, we have those which are purely spiritual, as prayer, reading the *word*, singing of psalms, and spiritual hymns, making melody in our hearts, unto the Lord. These spiritual sacrifices, too, are offered by a new order of ministry. The before mentioned prophecy from Jeremiah, the apostle, quotes Heb. 8, 9, evidently to shew that the typical or Sinai dispensation, is superceded, and we now have the covenant of grace, as it was established with the patriarchs in its most simple, pure, and spiritual state.

Again : It is *new*, because, never more to be changed, as other dispensations have been.

Again : It is *new*, because, ratified and sanctioned in a manner far superior to the former. The former with typical sacrifices, but this with the sacrifice of Christ himself. The former was glorious, but this excels in glory. In comparison of the former, the apostle gives this greatly the preference. He says, Heb. 8, 6 : " It is a better covenant, established upon better promises." 7, 9 : " With a better hope." 9, 23 : " With better sacrifices." This word better being used in so many instances, imports a great increase of light, easier service, and fuller evidences of the abounding grace of God, in the forgiveness of sins. Under the former dispensations, the High Priest entered once a year, into the holy of holies, with the blood of atonement, but now " Christ by his own blood, hath entered *not* into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9, 7, 24. Thus the apostle contrasts the two dispensations, or different modes, of administering the covenant of grace. But the covenant itself is, in all ages, the same, and described in terms unequivocal and easy to be understood. The covenant, which God established with the patriarchs, is called *his covenant* ; his *everlasting covenant* ; the *everlasting covenant*, &c. 1st Chron. 16, 15 : " Be ye



always mindful of *his* covenant, the word which he commanded to a *thousand* generations, even the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath which he swore unto Isaac, and hath confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an *everlasting* covenant." Psalm 105, 5, is the same ; a thousand *generations*, inspiration says, but from Abraham to Christ, as we learn from the first chapter of St. Matthew, was but forty-two generations. Again, as we have seen the fundamental articles of the covenant of grace are the same, in every dispensation of it, which prove most clearly that the covenant is ever the same.

Again : The promises, concerning the Gentiles, which were made under the former dispensation, as we have before seen, were made to the church : "Thou (the church) shalt call a nation, and nations shall run unto thee." The continuance of the church, enjoying covenant blessings, is parallel with the duration of the sun and moon. Psalm 80, 34. "My covenant, will I not break nor alter the thing, that is gone out of my mouth. Once have I sworn, by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne, as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven Selah." Isaiah 54, 10. "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord." Some may think, this is the covenant of redemption, between the Father and the Son : But no ; it is the covenant of God's peace with his church. It is made, as we have before seen, with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah. It is, therefore, the same, in all ages, and embraces the same subjects.

Again : Many passages, from the New-Testament, might with propriety be introduced here ; a few only will be sufficient. When, by the parable of the vineyard, our Saviour had drawn from the Jews, a just sentence against themselves, in the one which they pronounced against the husbandman of the vineyard, for their unnatural conduct, against the owner of the vineyard, he said, Mat. 21, 43 : "Therefore, I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from *you*, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof." Here is a declaration of fact ; a severe and awful judgment is pro-

nounced, and in terms so plain, that his meaning cannot be misunderstood. Their church state, their covenant privileges and blessings, are to be taken from them, (the Jews) and given to the Gentiles. The kingdom is not brought to an end, and a new kingdom erected in its place, but a *transfer* is made. The same identical kingdom, the church state, is *transferred* from the one to the other. It is transferred from one *nation* to another *nation*. The argument then is unavoidable, that as the kingdom did, before the transfer was made, embrace both parents, and their children, so it must embrace both parents and their children, after the transfer was made, and the kingdom was given to the Gentiles ; otherwise the analogy is destroyed, and the kingdom would not be the same kingdom, which was taken from the Jews. The argument establishes, the sameness of the church, and the membership of infants. It is conclusive, unavoidable, and unanswerable.

Again : St. Paul, in several of his epistles, treats this subject in a manner so explicit, as not to be misunderstood. Rom. 11, 1 : "I say, then, hath God cast away his people ? God forbid ! God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew." He goes on to say, that as there was, in the days of Elias, a remnant, so now. Verse 5 : "Even so at this present time also, there is a remnant, according to the election of grace." And this remnant was now, as we learn from the Acts of the apostles, much larger than the one in the days of Elias. It was then seven thousand ; but now, many myriads, or many ten thousands. Acts 21, 20. These were not cast away, but in the highest degree enjoyed the full privileges of the covenant. The apostle proceeds to state, that a part of Israel, had stumbled, had fallen, were cast away, were broken off, &c., but in time should be restored. He speaks, verse 12, of their fall, and of their fulness. Verse 15, of their being cast away, and of their being received again. Verse 17, of their being broken off ; and 23, 24, of their being grafted in again. Verse 16 : "For if the first fruit be *holy*, the lump is also holy ; and if the root be holy, so are the branches." This is predicated, on the well known precept, which required the Jews to offer unto God, the first fruits of their harvest, the wave sheaf. Levit. 23, 20. And when this was offered, the whole harvest, in all the land which was the lump, was accounted *holy* ; suitable for the use of the



people, and for offerings unto God. The whole harvest, in all the land, was the lump, and was accounted *holy*.

The apostle also alludes to the equally well known precept, concerning the planting and cultivating of fruit trees : And of these, the olive, for the beauty of its leaves and blossoms, the abundance of its oil and fruit, was delightful, and useful in preference to most others. Levit. 19, 23. Three years the fruit was to be accounted uncircumcised : that is, vile, unclean, unholy. The fourth year, which was as soon as the fruit came to perfection, it must be offered unto God, as a thanksgiving. This consecrated the tree, the root, the stock, and all the branches which should ever after grow upon it. All were to be accounted *holy*. By these similitudes, he shews that the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to whom the promises were made, and whose pious services had been accepted, were the first fruits, and the root of the allegorical tree. The nation, therefore, descended from them, was the harvest, the lump, the natural branches of the good olive, and were accounted *holy*. And when, by the severity of God, were broken off, were, nevertheless, a part of the lump, and suitable to be received again. This idea is confirmed, verse 28 : " But as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." The fathers were the *first fruits* ; and in the divine economy, these, their seed and offspring, although broken off, are still accounted a part of the lump, the natural branches of the good olive tree, and must be grafted in again. So it hath pleased God to speak of the church, by the similitude of an *olive tree*. Jer. 11, 16 : " The Lord hath called thy name, a green olive tree, fair and of goodly fruit." The patriarchs, Abraham eminently, whose pious services were accepted, as the wave sheaf, which consecrated the lump, the harvest, the nation ; or, as the fruit of the fourth year, which consecrated the tree, the stock, the root, and all its future branches. Their church state, covenant promises, blessings and privileges, instituted ordinances, means of grace, communion with God, together with divine influences, showered down upon them, were the nutriment, the fatness, by which the branches, being continually nourished, were healthy, vigorous, luxuriant, and abundantly fruitful. Verse 17 : " And if some of the branches were broken off, and thou (the Gentiles) being a wild olive tree, which is wild by



nature, wert grafted in, among them, (the Jews not broken off,) partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree." 18: "Thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."

This allegory is the more beautiful, when we recollect, as historians tell us, there were two kinds of olives. One, as we have observed, exceedingly useful; the other, a distinct species, wild and worthless. Such were the Gentiles by nature; but when grafted in, are borne, sustained and nourished, resting upon the Jewish stock. Verse 20: "Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith." Mark the antithesis. The grafting in, stands opposed to the breaking off. Faith to unbelief. Wild olive to good olive. Wild by nature, to the natural branches. Again: "If some of the branches were broken off, and thou (Gentiles) wert grafted in among them, (the Jews not broken off,) and partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree." Verse 24: "Grafted in contrary to nature." That is, a bad cion on a good stock, and made to partake of, or bear the fruit of the stock, instead of the natural fruit of the cion, which was wild by nature;" how much more shall these, which be the natural branches," a part of the original lump, still "beloved for the fathers' sakes, be grafted into their *own* olive tree?"—"Their *own* olive tree." Hence, from this chapter, we most clearly understand:

*First:* That the believing Jews, who were in the apostolic age very numerous, continued in the same covenant standing as before. *They* were not cast away, not broken off, not unchurched. "No," says the apostle, under the solemnity of a "God forbid;" but were now enjoying for themselves and their children the highest degree of blessedness, promised in the covenant, made with their father Abraham.

*Secondly:* The unbelieving Jews were cast away, were broken off, and excluded from the most of their privileges. The Old Testament scriptures, and circumcision, the seal of the covenant, from whence they may yet have a faint hope that the Saviour still will come, and God's promise that he will gather them, are about all they are now permitted to enjoy.

*Thirdly:* The believing Gentiles were grafted in, united with, and made to grow upon that stock, as the cion is grafted into a tree. Breaking off, and grafted in, stand in con-

trast. Faith, as we have before seen, was always required of Jews for covenant standing. For the *want* of it, the unbelieving Jews were broken off. And on condition of having faith, the Gentiles were received. And as the condition of covenant standing was the same to both, so the privileges were the same, viz: "*The root and fatness of the olive tree.*" They were broken off, *parents and children* together. So the Gentiles were grafted in, and enjoy the same privileges and blessings, for themselves and their children, as the Jews *not* broken off. This reasoning is clear and undeniable.

*Fourthly*: The Jews, though thus broken off, are not as the unbelieving Gentiles, the wild olive tree, but must again be grafted into their "*own olive tree.*" How precious, and how sweet, will these words sound to Jews: "When the children of Israel shall come; they and the children of Judah, going and *weeping*, saying, Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant." And when God shall say, "I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first born." "I will be the God of all the families of Israel." As they were cast away, so they must be received. As they were broken off, so they must be grafted in again, not into a new church, but into their "*own olive tree.*" As they were broken off, in their family capacity, parents and children together, so they must again be grafted in.

What then could be more ridiculous and absurd, than for the apostle, to talk as he does, about the first fruits and the lump, the good olive and wild olive, the root and the branches, breaking off and grafting in, casting away and receiving, branches wild by nature grafted into the good olive, and natural branches grafted into their *own* olive tree, and in using universal terms too, as Gentiles, that is nations, in the most extensive sense, Israel, all Israel, the world, &c., if the covenant was not perpetual, and the church the same? And the whole of the apostle's beautiful allegory and antithesis, through this chapter, is totally incompatible and irreconcilable with the baptist plan of a new church composed of individual adult believers!!!

Our baptist brethren, who have written in defence of their side of the question, have commonly passed by this chapter, without taking any notice of it. Some, however, have attempted to answer the argument, by simply saying, "St. Paul



was not speaking about baptism at all ; and, therefore, this chapter has nothing to do with the controversy." This is a most pitiful evasion, and is indeed no better than yielding the point. Because, St. Paul was speaking of *church membership, visible standing, covenant privileges, &c.* The membership of infants, is undeniably established. Their baptism follows of course. The apostle is shewing most clearly, and beyond all contradiction, that the church, under the gospel dispensation, is the same as before ; and the Gentiles (that is, every family with a believing head,) were grafted in upon the Jewish stock ; and when grafted in, were a part of the same lump, were consecrated by the first fruits, and were *holy* in the same manner, or sense, as the Jews were an *holy nation*, and with them do partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

Supposing, then, at some distant period, a company of Jews, deeply convicted of their error, and by penitence and prayer, "going and weeping," enquiring the way to Zion, and earnestly seeking their good olive tree, from whence their unbelieving ancestors were broken off, should meet a baptist preacher, who should thus address them : "Dear brethren, if now you wish to become christians, and enter into the visible kingdom of Christ, you must unite with us. We, and we only, of all the various sects who call themselves christians, do in reality belong to the visible kingdom of Christ, and have *your olive*. Other denominations baptize their children, and think they bring them into a covenant relation with God. But children are not capable of sustaining a covenant relation with God. To put the seal of the covenant upon them, is only to seal a blank. You, who are adults, we can receive ; but your children must be left behind." Will the Jews be satisfied, with reasoning of this kind ? No, they stand astonished, but at length reply : "Your hearts may be sincere, but your reasoning is bad. You have not our olive. The God of Abraham never taught you to reason in this way."

The apostles were all Jews, and St. Paul was a learned Jew. Let us then follow him, in his instructions, a little further. Gal. 3, 13 : "Christ hath redeemed us, from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that the *blessing* of *Abraham* might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." The death of Christ, and the atonement made by him, was to



the end that the Gentiles, Eph. 2, 19, "should be fellow-citizens with the saints, and household of faith." 3, 6 : "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." In other words, that the Gentiles might be brought into the same covenant, and enjoy the same spiritual blessings, as were granted to Abraham, that God should be their God, and the God of their children.

The stability of the covenant, the apostle also illustrates, by the similarity of human transactions. Gal. 3, 15 : "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men," (that is, as men transact their business :) "Though it be but a man's covenant," as a bond, a deed, or a will. "Yet if it be confirmed," signed, sealed and ratified, no man disannuleth, or addeth thereto." Such is the nature of human transactions. Nothing can be taken from such a covenant, and nothing can be added to it. And if these human covenants are, by the nature of things, necessarily unalterable, how much more is God's everlasting covenant established and confirmed, in the most solemn manner? This is the apostle's reasoning, verse 16 : "Now to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made." "He saith not unto seeds, as of many, but as of one ; and to thy *seed*, which is Christ." This word seed is vastly comprehensive, being both singular and plural. As singular, it points immediately to Christ : as plural, it comprehends Abraham's natural descendants, and also the Gentiles, on whom, through Christ, the blessing of Abraham comes. Verse 17 : "And this, I say, that the covenant, which was confirmed of God, in Christ, the law (or Sinai dispensation) which was four hundred and thirty years after, can not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." The promise is unchangeable, and is as strong to the seed, as to Abraham himself—both to his natural seed, and to his promised seed, the Gentiles. To him the promise was made sure. Verse 8 : "In thee, shall all nations be blessed." The Gentiles are the children of the promise. Rom. 4, 16 : "That the promise might be sure to *all the seed* : Not to that, which is of the law only, but to that also, which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all : As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations." Chap. 9, 8 : "The *children* of the promise are counted for the seed."

Again : The word *diatheke*, which is commonly rendered covenant, does signify, both a covenant and a testament ; that is, a person's last *Will*. It is, then, the last will and testament of Christ, that the same blessings as were given to Abraham, should be given also as his legacy to the Gentiles, the promised seed of Abraham. Heb. 9, 16 : " For where a testament *diatheke* is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator." " For a testament *diatheke*, *will*, is of force, after men are dead ; otherwise, it is of no strength at all, while the testator liveth." While the testator lives, the whole interest is in his own hands ; he may, at his pleasure, permit the heir to use it, or he may revoke or alter the *will* ; but his death makes it unalterable, forever after, and effectual. So Christ, in the former exhibitions of his grace, permitted his people to enjoy in essence and in substance, the same grace, blessings, covenant promises and privileges, as under the gospel. But, according to the similitude, *then*, by permission, or in anticipation of his death, but *now* by the testator's death, in reality, the testament is confirmed, and we enjoy the blessings as a legacy, in the strongest manner secured to us. So also, types or emblems of the Redeemer's sacrifice were appointed, for the benefit of his people, anterior to his death, and are spoken of, in the same manner, as his real blood. When Moses sprinkled the blood of calves and goats, he said, verse 20 : " This is the blood of the testament," *diatheke*. Chapt. 9, 15 : " He is the mediator of the New Testament, *diathekes kaines*. 13, 20 : " Through the blood of the everlasting covenant, *diathekes aioniou*." Speaking, then, according to the figure, the heirs of this rich legacy, never came into the full and proper possession of it, until after the death of Christ, the testator ; or, in other words, *the same grace*, blessings, promises, and covenant privileges, were exhibited, both before and after the death of Christ, with only this circumstantial difference : Previous to his death, they were enjoyed on condition, that it would take place ; but were, by his death, forever after unalterably secured by it.

Again : Gal. 3, 29 : " And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The promise, as we have said before, is to Abraham's *seed* as strong as to Abraham himself. And the idea of one's being another's heir, is, that at the other's decease, the heir



shall come into full possession of the other's inheritance. The apostle had said before, that Abraham had two sons. The one Ishmael, by a bond woman, who was not an heir. The other, viz : Isaac, by a free woman, who was an heir. He proceeds to say, Chap. 4. 28 : " Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise." If then we know what interest Isaac had in the covenant, we may know what interest believing Gentiles have now. We do not take the place of Ishmael, who was rejected, but of Isaac, who was the true legitimate seed of Abraham, an *heir*, a child who, in his father's place, inherited the same promises as were made to his father. Nothing can be plainer. The promise was as much to Isaac and to Jacob, and to their seed, as to Abraham and his seed, and to us and to our seed.

In this section the following things are made abundantly plain : The covenant is the same now as it ever was, unchangeably *The everlasting covenant*. The church is the same as under the former dispensations. Covenant privileges are not abridged, but in some respects very much enlarged. We Gentiles are grafted into the good olive tree, and partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree, and every believing parent is to his family what Abraham was to his. Yea, more, since the *diatheke* testament is confirmed, the typical burdens are removed, and we have an easier service, better promises, better sacrifices, and a better hope.

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## SECTION XI.

### EVIDENCE OF INFANT BAPTISM FROM THE PRACTICE OF THE APOSTLES.

In the preceding sections, we have found clear and abundant evidence that God's covenant is perpetual, his church in all ages the same, and the children of believing parents encircled in the bosom of it.

Robert Hall, a distinguished Baptist writer, says, page 19, " In support of the denial of infant baptism, Baptists allege the total silence of scripture, respecting the baptism of in-



infants, together with their *incompetence* to comprehend the truths, or sustain the engagements which they conceive baptism designed to exhibit." These are the two pillars on which they depend for the support of their scheme. But we have nothing to do with the *competence* of children. God himself has decided that they are *competent*. Provided, then, the scriptures of the New Testament are silent, as the Baptists allege, the very fact of their being silent confirms the children's right, because privileges once granted must forever continue, unless, by some special order, they are taken away. Where then is the order to contravene the children's right?

If children were baptized by the apostles, there could be no need of an express mention of it in the records, because they had *ever* been in covenant, and had received the same seal of it as was administered to their parents; so then, if the scriptures are silent, it is to be understood as a matter of course that they received it still. But if now, under the gospel, they were no longer to receive the same seal as their parents, a special order must be given for that purpose, and an explicit record made that children were no longer in covenant, and the seal which was administered to parents, was no longer administered to children.

We say again, privileges once granted, by special authority, must unquestionably continue until an order to contravene them can be produced. No such order can be produced. No such order was ever given. Our brethren, forsooth, are necessarily driven to take what they call the silence of scripture, for such an order.

If then, in the pursuit of our enquiries, we find such statements, and narrations of facts, and circumstances, as either from the plain letter of the word, or from true and legitimate inferences and deductions, will *agree* to the idea, and fact, that infants were included in the covenant, and were still entitled to the same seal, as was administered to their parents, it is an additional evidence in their favor.

Before we proceed to consider the particular instances of baptisms administered by the apostles, it may be proper once more to bring into view God's *family promise* and declaration, which remain unalterably the same, under the gospel as before. As we have seen, the covenant at its commencement, was established with *families*. The promise to Eve,

was a family promise, as much to her husband and to her children, as to herself. Noah was called into the ark with his household. The covenant was established with him and his seed. And if possible, the exhibition to Abraham was still more plain. "I will establish my covenant with thee, and with thy seed, to be a God to thee, and to thy seed. And not only in thy family, but in thee." Gen. 12, 3: "Shall all families of the earth be blessed." The same promise was repeated to Isaac, Gen. 28, 14: "In thee and in thy *seed* shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Jer. 31, 1: "I will be the God of all the *families* of Israel." Which, most certainly, is as much to the promised seed, under the gospel, as to the natural descendants of Abraham, under the former dispensation. So also when the destroying angel was to pass over his people, in Egypt, Ex. 12, 22, God would have a family token. The door posts must be sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice. This consecrated the family. Exod. 12, 4: "If the *house* be too little for the lamb." 21, "Take you a lamb according to your *families*." Deut. 14, 26: "Thou shalt rejoice, thou and thine *household*." 15, 20: "Thou shalt eat it before the Lord, thou and thy household." We see then, that house, household, families, &c., are with God covenant terms, the same as you and your seed, and are of determinate signification.

The family *promise* is often quoted, in the New Testament, to shew the continuance and extent of God's covenant mercies. Acts 3, 25, and Gal. 3, 8. In other instances covenant terms, as house, family, household, &c. are used in a manner too plain to be misunderstood. St. Paul says, Heb. 11, 7: "By faith Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his *house*." And St. Peter, 1st Epist. 3, 24, says, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us." It brings our families into God's covenant, which exhibits salvation. Noah and his family entering into the ark is a similitude of a Christian family entering into covenant with God, baptism being the seal of the transaction. By the term family, is meant all that are under the special care and government of the head of the family, such as *he* or *she* may command. Gen. 18, 19: Abraham could command his *household*. And Joshua 24, 15, could resolve, "as for me and my house we will serve the Lord."



The language of the Most High, concerning families, is too plain to be misunderstood. When he foretells great accessions from the Gentiles to be made to the church under the gospel, he foretells their coming by families. Isaiah 49, 22 : "They shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders."

Again : God being the God of families, family worship follows, of course, and the neglect of it is a sin so unnatural, that God says he will pour out his fury on the families that call not on his name. Jer. 10, 25.

Again : Under the figure of the feast of tabernacles, gospel privileges are foretold, Zech. 14, 17 : "And it shall be that whoso will *not come up*, of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem, (the spiritual Jerusalem, the gospel church,) to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles, even upon that family there shall be no rain." The tabernacle was reared up in the wilderness as an emblem of gospel glory. It was an emblem of Christ, in his human nature, Heb. 8, 2—9, 2, 9, 11.

It sometimes signified the church of Christ, as Psalm 15, 1 : "Lord who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" As the tabernacle was an emblem of Christ in his human nature, so the feast of tabernacles was an emblem of gospel fulness, which is often called a feast, a great feast, a marriage feast, a great supper, &c. The Israelites were required to keep this feast, in remembrance of their dwelling in tents in the wilderness at the time the tabernacle was reared up. So it is expounded, Levit. 23, 43.

In the words above quoted, the prophet speaks of gospel times, and the prosperity, of the spiritual Jerusalem, the Christian church, under the figure or similitude of the feast of tabernacles. Here it is foretold that great accessions shall come from the Gentiles, to the enjoyment of gospel privileges, and to the performance of gospel duties. It was on the eighth day of this solemnity, John 7, 37, the last day, the great day of the feast, that Jesus published his great gospel call. "Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and I will give him living water." The graces and comforts of the spirit are often compared to living streams, to rivers of living water, &c. But those who come and unite with the gospel church *must* come by



*families*, and the family that will not come up, God will reckon with. On that family there shall be no rain. Every thing shall wither. Now then, when God will be known as the God of families, when he has ordained that the gospel church shall consist of families, that he will pour out his fury on the families that call not on his name, and on the family that will not come, there shall be no rain, no divine influences; it is absurd, inconsistent, impious and awful, to harbor the thought that the family is not under the strongest possible obligation to be *consecrated* to God.

We will now proceed to consider matters of fact. In the second chapter of Acts, we have an account of three thousand, who were baptized in one day. Peter says, 38 and 39 verses: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. For the *promise* is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." This being the first instance of baptism, under the new dispensation, is an important case; and let us with candor, and free from prejudice, consider,

1. The words which Peter uses.
2. Their analogy to other scriptures.
3. Some attendant circumstances.

1. The words themselves. And certainly, they convey no idea of the exclusion of children. But certainly their plain, simple, and grammatical construction, shews that they do include children. The verb *repent*, *metanoesate*, is in the second person plural and agrees with *umeis*, *ye*. The verb *baptized*, *baptistheto*, is in the third person singular and agrees with *ekastos*, a universal term, every one. The whole sentence is, *metanoesate, kai baptistheto, ekastos umon*; both verbs are imperative, that is, commands. But it is easy for any one to see, that they are of different *extension*, because they are of different numbers and persons, and have different words for their nominative cases, with which they agree. This, properly speaking, is no criticism, but only giving the plain, simple, grammatical construction of the sentence, which every one who has the least acquaintance with language, must know. If Peter had designed that baptism should have been only of the same extension, with the actual repentance of adult persons, he must have continued the

same form of expression, and must have worded each member of the sentence alike. Each verb must have been in the same number and person, and must have had for its agreement, the same nominative case. But now the command to repent is limited by the pronoun *ye*, while the command to be baptized is more extensive, and has for its agreement, a universal term *ekastos*, every one. The reason for this is obvious. The little children were not, as the adults, capable of actual repentance, but were equally capable of all the ends of baptism, as they had been of circumcision; were capable of sustaining a covenant relation with God, capable of being the subjects of his gracious *promise*, "I will be their God;" capable of being encircled in the arms of divine mercy, and of receiving blessing from God, and from Christ. In a word, they were such as had been in all prior dispensations, acknowledged. God himself decided their capacity and suitability, and now not a word could be objected.

Now, supposing the same form of address had been made to a single family, consisting of parents and children; had Peter entered into an house, and after discoursing awhile, the parents were deeply affected, and being concerned for their salvation cried out, What must we do? And Peter had said "Repent and be baptized every one of you;" grammatically, Repent ye, and let every one of you be baptized. Would there be a question about the extension of the verb repent? No, truly. Would there be a question about the verb baptized? No, truly: it is connected with a universal term *every one*.

What then, is the difference, when he addresses a large number of families collected together? There can be none. If, then, children were to be baptized, this is enough. It comprehends them fully. But if they were not to be baptized, it is a form of expression which we should not expect.

Peter's commands here, are worded in the same manner as those of Moses at the institution of the passover, as they stand in the *septuagint*, viz: the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which, in that age, was in common use among the Jews, and with which they were more familiar than they were with the Hebrew. And one can scarcely imagine how Peter could fall into the very same mode of expression, as Moses used on that occasion, except he had his eye fixed on

the very passage we are now about to mention. *Exod. 12, 22* : "And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin, and *none* of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning." Between the Greek and the English there is a slight variation in the manner of expression, but not in the sense. In the English, *none* ; a negative pronoun is used ; none of you shall go out ; in the Greek, the negative adverb *ouk* is used, and the same universal term, the very word *ekastos* ; every one shall *not* go out. Moses says, "Strike the lintel," &c. This extends only to the parents, and heads of families, and does not include the children. Peter says, *repent* ; this is also an address to adults, and does not extend to infants. "The extension of a term, regards the number of individual subjects to which it may be applied."—Hedge's Logic, page 36.

Moses says, "Every one of you shall not go out." In this requirement his phraseology is changed, from what it was before—the extension is enlarged ; he uses the same universal term, *ekastos*, which includes the whole family. The lives of the children as well as of the parents were protected, on condition that they went not out of the house. Peter, addressing his hearers, uses terms of the same extension. His command to repent is limited by the pronoun *ye*, extends to adults, but not to infants ; but in his requirements for *baptism*, his phraseology is changed in the same manner as that of Moses ; the extension is in the same manner enlarged, and the same *universal term*, *ekastos*, is used ; and if this manner of expression did in the former case, *as we know it did, include children*, and designedly too, why not in the latter ? If then Peter did not mean that children should be included, in the command for baptism, why is this perfect similarity of expression ? Why does he use words, in number, and person, and extension, with those of Moses ? Why is his phraseology changed, in the last member of the sentence ? And why does he use the same universal term, *ekastos* ? which enlarges the extension of *this* command beyond the other ? Our brethren say the children were excluded. Strange language to exclude them ! Let him believe it who can believe it ! ! The reader is requested to turn to *Exodus 12, 22*, and see for himself.



Let us compare a little further. When our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the sacred supper, he said, Take, eat, *Labete, phagete*. Both commands are worded alike, and are of the same extension. The supper not being designed, like baptism, for a household ordinance, the Saviour is careful so to word these two commands, as to exclude children and infants from eating, as well as from taking; and though when he gave the cup, he said, Drink ye all of it, he uses the word *pantes*; it is in apposition with *umeis, ye*, and the verb is in the same number and person as the verb *take*. The phraseology is not changed, the extension is not enlarged. But when Peter gives one command to *repent*, and another to be baptized, he is as careful to use a form of words, which *includes* the children, in the command for baptism, as the Saviour is to exclude them from the supper. A form which had been known, of old time, even from the institution of the pass-over, to comprehend both parents and children. And the same form of words, which in the former case will include them, will also in the latter. This is undeniable.

2. We will, in the next place, attend to the analogy of scripture. "For the *promise* is unto you, and to your children." These words contain the substance, or are in substance, the same as the promissory part of the covenant made with Abraham, Gen. 17, 7: "I will establish my covenant with thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, to be a *God* to thee and to thy seed after thee." The family promise, as we have noticed before, is of the same nature and extension. In the New Testament, the covenant made with Abraham, is often by way of emphasis, called *The Promise*, as Gal. 3, 16, to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made. Rom. 4, 16: "To the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." 9, 8: "The children of the promise (believing Gentiles) are counted for the seed." Eph. 3, 6: "That the Gentiles might be counted for the seed." The well known promise, grant, covenant, or exhibition of mercy, is to parents and their *seed*. As we have before fully shewn, God is the God of families, and will not admit parents, without their children.

Now, Peter says, the promise is to you, adults, who ask to know what you shall do to be saved. God's blessed promise is, that he will be a God unto you. And it does not stop

here : It is to your children too. "I will be a God to thy seed." Neither does it stop here : It is extended to all that are afar off. In thee, saith God to Abraham, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. But who are those afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call ? Our brethren say, The children of Peter's hearers, and all others, until God shall call them, with an eternal and effectual calling. But the analogy of scripture teaches very different. The Jews, in covenant, are ever spoken of as being near unto God. Deut. 4, 7, and Psalm 148, 14. And the Gentiles, out of covenant, are *afar off*. Let the scripture be its own interpreter. Speaking of the Gentiles, Eph. 2, 12, the apostle calls them, "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise. But now, in Christ Jesus ye, who sometimes were *afar off*, (out of covenant) are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Who came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) that were *afar off*, and to them (the Jews) that were nigh. Now, therefore, ye (Gentiles) are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God."

Further : God's call is of two kinds ; externally by his word to a church state, and internally by his holy spirit, unto eternal life. "Many are called, but few are chosen." Isaiah 48, 22 : "Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my *called*." These words are addressed to the nation collectively. The whole nation are styled God's called. Again, 51, 2 : "Look unto Abraham your father, and Sarah that bare you : For I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." When God calls to a church state, he calls by families. He is the God of families. Of all the families of Israel ; yes, of all the families of the earth. Gen. 12, 3 : "In thee all the *families* of the earth shall be blessed." 28, 14 : "In thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Abraham was God's called. Unto him we are directed to look. So the believing Gentiles are God's called. Rom. 9, 23 : "Even *us* whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also." As God called Abraham with his house, so he called all the Jews, and so he calls the Gentiles. The analogy of scripture, certainly agrees *not* to the idea that children were excluded, but to the idea that Peter taught, acted, and was understood, in conformity to the cove-



nant, which God made with Abraham, which included children, and required parents to put the seal of the covenant upon them.

3 : That Peter's command was given, and understood to comprehend children, is evident from sundry circumstances. One is, children were then in covenant, and had been through all former dispensations, and had received the covenant seal, and this privilege they could not now be deprived of, without a special order to contravene it. Because it is said, verse 41, "That they who gladly received his word were baptized," our brethren argue, in opposition to all other evidence, that children were not baptized, because of their incompetence to understand the word, receive it gladly, and sustain the obligations arising from the ordinance of baptism. But, the plain meaning of the expression is simply this. They who gladly received the word complied with the command for baptism, which as we have seen before comprehended the children, and in the reason assigned, children are expressly mentioned; and it was certainly the business of those who could receive the word gladly, to give up themselves, and their children, in compliance with the command. There was no need that the historian should be more particular than he is. God's own act, in constituting children members of his church; in appointing the covenant seal to be placed upon them; in promising that he will be their God, beyond a doubt decide the case of their being competent.

Again : Another circumstance, and one of no small importance is, that the same character and qualifications are ascribed to children of believers in the New Testament, as to the circumcised children in the Old Testament; and in both Testaments, the same as given to their parents, which again most clearly proves, that parents and children stand in the same covenant relation now, as under the former dispensation. When parents are believers, their children are denominated believers also. Mat. 10, 6 : "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones, that believe in me." Infants are called God's children. Ezek. 16, 21. They belong to the kingdom of God. Mark 10, 14. And Mat. 10, 42, and Acts 10, 15, are called *disciples*. So also they are called *holy*. Ezra 9, 2, Isaiah 6, 13, 1st Cor. 7, 14.

So also, the very deeds and actions, which parents do, are



ascribed to their children. "When the parent neglected to circumcise the child, then the *child* is said to break God's covenant. Gen. 17, 14 : "He hath broken my covenant." So also children, at a month old, are styled, Num. 3, 28, "keepers of the sanctuary." But these are the acts of parents ascribed to their children : because, as was before said, God hath so constituted these relations, between parents and children. In the divine economy, parents are the natural guardians, the covenant head, the representatives or proxy for their children. And, as we have before seen, though the Saviour required *faith* of adults, yet he healed children on the faith of their parents.

Again : Another circumstance was, Peter's hearers, who were chiefly Jews, entertained a high sense of covenant privileges : and, we have reason to believe, would have made loud complaints, had their children been rejected. They were an extremely jealous people. They caviled with Christ, when his disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders, and eat with unwashen hands ; Mark 7, 4 ; and when compelled by hunger, they plucked a few ears of corn on the Sabbath day. They were loud and clamorous, because he healed a sick man on the Sabbath day. They would quarrel, for a distinction of meats and drinks, for the observance of new moons, and other festival days, and complained most bitterly, when even christian Jews eat their common meals, with uncircumcised persons. Acts 10, 28 ; Rom. 14, 1 ; Gal. 2, 11, 12, 13 ; Col. 2, 16.

Again : The privilege of being in covenant with God, they esteemed above all others, and were exact, even to a punctilio, in putting the seal of the covenant on their children. Luke 1, 59 ; 2, 21 ; Phil. 3, 5. And God himself had taught them, to hold the uncircumcised in great contempt and abhorrence. When he threatened an awful judgment on the Jews, he says, Ezek. 28, 10 : "Thou shalt lie with the uncircumcised." 31, 18 : "Thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised." Is it then *possible* for us to believe, that the apostles taught the Jews, that their children must now be excluded from the covenant, and the seal of the covenant no longer be put upon them ? And, at the same time, not a single *Jew*, no priest, no scribe, no self-righteous Pharisee, no caviling lawyer, made a

breath of objection to it? It is not possible—we cannot believe it.

Further : The *unbelieving* Jews, and false teachers, who were filled with the most bitter, most rancorous and persecuting spirit, against Christ and the apostles, brought every objection against them and their doctrines, which wit could contrive, or malice employ. But they never brought this objection : that the privileges of their children, were in the least degree, altered or abridged. The reason is evident ; such an objection could not be brought.

When we take these circumstances into consideration, it is beyond all credibility, that such a revolution took place, concerning the membership of believer's infants, in the church (as our brethren contend for) at this time, and among this people, and not one syllable of objection. Believers themselves would have scrupled that religion, which so much curtailed them of privileges, granted immediately by God himself, and sanctioned by all his teachers and prophets, from Abraham down to that very day. And, had such a change taken place, the *enemies* of christianity could not have failed to improve it to their advantage. It was their object to make all believe, that Christ was an impostor, and his disciples deluded enthusiasts. What argument could have been so effectual, with the people, as to tell them, this new religion excluded their children from the privileges and seal of the covenant of their God?

Again : The last circumstance, which will be mentioned, is, that the church lived in common stock. Verse 44 : "All that believed were together, and had all things common." So also, chapter 4, 32 ; those who lived in common are called, "The multitude of them that *believed*, and were of one heart and of one soul." The whole three thousand mentioned, chapter 2, 41, as being baptized and added, and such others as were added shortly after, now live in one community, supplied from one treasury. They are a distinct company by themselves, and are called "*All* them that *believed*." "*The multitude of them that believed*." This believing multitude, was the church ; and it is evident, from the nature of the case, that this believing multitude, the church, was composed of families, or households. The children of course must be here. They, as well as their parents, must eat, and



drink, and be clothed. It would be barbarous indeed, and abhorrent to human feelings, as well inconsistent with religion, for parents not to keep thier children with them, that they might feed, clothe, instruct, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And those who were here, are without distinction called, "All them that *believed*." "The multitude of them, that *believed*." Now, this could not be said of children, with propriety, except they were incorporated with their parents, in the covenant and church, and had received the covenant seal.

We will now consider the record left us of some other baptisms. Acts 8, 12 : "They were baptized, both men and women." Our brethren suppose, that when express mention is made of men and women, and no mention of children, that if children were baptized, express mention would be made of them also. But the same phraze, elsewhere, comprehends children. Why not here? Joshua 8, 25 : "All that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand." From other circumstances, we learn, that their children also were included. This passage, which says : "They were baptized, both men and women," is as capable, and as liable, for ought we see, of comprehending children, as the other. And if children were excluded, it would have been inconsistent for the historian to leave a record which would include them, or would render the case doubtful whether they were baptized or not. But if they were baptized, the record is sufficient.

We read, also, of the baptism of some households : of Lydia, that she was baptized, and her household ; of the Jailor, that he was baptized, and all *his* ; and of Stephanus, that his household was baptized. These records are in general terms. And in covenant terms, as we have before shewn, that house, household family, &c., are covenant terms. Such as we might expect, if according to God's family promise, the members of these families were baptized on the faith of the covenant head of the family. But if *none* were baptized, except on their own faith, some more explicit record would be necessary, and it would be expected, there should be no ambiguity or doubt, but express mention, that all were actual believers. A record, in general terms, would well enough *agree* with the idea, that children were in covenant, and of



course entitled to the covenant seal. But, such an account would *not* agree with the idea that children were excluded, and none were baptized, but actual adult believers. The record, then, would be indefinite and doubtful. Baptists, it is believed, never leave a record in so loose a manner. No Baptist preacher would leave a record, that such a *woman* believed and was baptized, and her household, or that such a man and all *his*, without saying expressly they were all believers. Because, households are not only covenant *terms*, but very commonly do, and always may contain infants, who cannot exercise personal faith. On their plan, we at once see it would not do, because after generations could not know whether all were, or were not believers, and could not know on whose right they were baptized. But on our plan, such a record would be, what we should expect, and what we often find.

Two of these households, we have an account of, in the 16th chapter of Acts. Paul was directed, by the Holy Ghost, to go to Phillippi, an idolatrous heathen city. Even here, it seems, there were a few people, who were worshippers of the true God, not of idols. They had a retired place where they met to pray. This, it seems, was the first time that any of the apostles, or any christian minister, ever came to this place, or to this city. Luke and Silas, Paul and Timothy, were all in company. They sought this sequestered place. Paul preached. One convert, was the fruit of the first sermon, viz: "Lydia, whose *heart* the Lord opened; that she attended unto the things, which were spoken of Paul; and when she was baptized, and her *household*, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged *me* to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained *us*." *Us* implies the writer as one, who was Luke. Now, here is express mention made, that the Lord opened the *heart* of Lydia, the head of the family, and express mention of her baptism, and the baptism of her household; but not the least intimation that any one, except herself, was a believer. She also says, If ye have judged *me* to be faithful unto the Lord, come into my house, &c. She does not say, If ye have judged *me*, and my household, but *me*. Our brethren say, We do not know, that Lydia had any children, or that she was ever married. True, but we know, that she had a *house* and

an household, and that after she believed, they of her household were baptized. And, the most plain and simple idea is, that she acted as the believing covenant head of her household. Baptists say again, When Paul and Silas returned to the house of Lydia, did they not find brethren there? And, may we not infer, from that circumstance, that Lydia's family were believers? We say no. They found brethren there, it is true, but they left *two* brethren there, viz: Luke and Timothy, who had been constrained to abide there, and who were not a little comforted to hear of the Jailor's conversion, and to see Paul, and Silas, so unexpectedly set at liberty.

The Jailor enquired, What shall I do to be saved? Paul replied: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house." Not only salvation to himself, but benefits and blessings to his family, are predicated on his believing. Salvation shall come to thine house. This is perfectly the same, as what the Saviour declared, Luke 19, 9, had come to the family of Zaccheus. On believing in Christ, "Salvation came to his house," he became a son of Abraham, and his family were all brought into the visible church, standing now in the covenant of grace, and enjoying the means of salvation. "This day," said the Saviour, "Salvation is come to this house, for he also is a son of Abraham." Thus spake Peter at Pentecost: "The promise is to you and to your children." And Paul, to the Jailor: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house." The plain import is, All thy family shall be brought into God's gracious covenant, enjoy the appointed means of salvation, and be interested in the promises, which God made to the father of the faithful: "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed." "I will be a God to thy family, as I am to all the families of Israel." "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." Their baptism, as well as his own, for ought that appears, was in consequence of *his* faith. The word was preached to all that were in the house, prisoners or servants, but no intimation is given, that any one believed, except the Jailor. But baptism is administered to him and *all his* straightway: That is, baptism was administered to all that were legally under his government, as the head of the family.



From the expression, verse 34, "And he believed in God, with all his house," our brethren suppose, that all his family, *all his* were believers; and it might seem so, without a careful investigation. But to prevent any misconception of this phrase, we will give the grammatical construction of each word, from the original Greek, which will prevent all misconception, or even a shadow of doubt. The words in the English, are a little transposed, but we will take them in their order, as they stand in the original:—*Egalliasato panoiki pepisteukos to Theo*. [He rejoiced with all his house, believing in God.] Who then rejoiced? He the Jailor. How did he rejoice? As he stood in relation to his household. There was a precept which required pious Jews, when they brought their offerings to the sanctuary, to do the same thing which the Jailor did. Deut. 14, 26: "And thou shalt eat there, before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, *thou and thine household*." If there were small children in the family, it did not alter the nature of the duty. The head of the family must rejoice, he and his household. So did Zaccheus. Luke 19, 6, 9. Nothing can be plainer, than that this whole sentence concerning the Jailor, is in the singular number. The verb rejoiced, and the participle believing, agree with the pronoun he. The adverb *panoiki*, simply qualifies the verb rejoiced, but has of itself no number nor person. It simply expresses the manner how he rejoiced; that is, as he stood in relation to his household, being their covenant head, their representative, and their proxy; and, in a word, as in the case before mentioned. Deut. 14, 26.

Again: 1st Cor. 1, 16: "I baptized also the household of Stephanas." We have, then, the distinct record of the baptism of three households. In two of them, express mention is made, that the head of the family was a believer, but no mention of any other. All were baptized, and the fair conclusion is, that in each case the household was given up, in covenant relation with God, in conformity to his own establishment, of being the God of families, the God of parents, and of their seed. The record of the household of Stephanas is left, without mentioning even that he was a believer. The whole household, it appears, was baptized. These records agree *not* to the practice of Baptists, but to the practice of Pedo-baptists. If then, the apostles acted upon the cove-



nant made with Abraham, and practised household baptism, then the records are what we should expect ; otherwise, the records are *not* what we should expect.

Again : The baptism of the Israelites at the Red Sea, is by the apostle presented to us, and urged upon us for our imitation. 1st Cor. 10, 1 : “ Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye (Gentiles) should be ignorant how that all our (Jewish) fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the Sea, and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud, and in the Sea ; and did all eat the same spiritual meat ; and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank, of that spiritual Rock, that followed them—and that Rock was Christ.” These things were all spiritual, Christ was the object figured forth. But, under the gospel, spiritual things are exhibited with clearer light, and enjoyed in a higher degree. “ That baptism,” says Mr. Henry, “ was a typical baptism.” It was truly typical. So was the manna which they eat, and the water which they drank. They were all typical. They were all spiritual. They pointed directly to gospel times and privileges. These things, saith the apostle, verse 6, were our examples, *tupoi*, types, emblems, symbols, patterns, &c. set before us for our imitation. Their baptism laid them under obligation to Moses, not as a man, but as a type of Christ, and as a servant faithful in all Christ’s house. Our’s brings us under obligation immediately to Christ himself, who is a “ son over his own house.” Their’s, Heb. 11, 29, was by faith in Christ. Our’s must be the same. Their’s comprehended their households, the little children, as well as their parents, were all baptized. Our’s must be so likewise, or else we do not follow the example. Thus far the apostle, from the example at the Red Sea, shews the nature, the extent, and obligation of christian baptism.

Three times he uses the word *all*, a universal *term*, which renders the meaning exceedingly emphatical : All were under the cloud : All passed through the Sea : and All were baptized in the cloud and in the Sea. Such was the example set before us. That was the *tupos*, the *type*, the *pattern* and our’s must be in conformity to it.

We will close this section, with the consideration of the Ark, which is exhibited to us as a type of our baptism. God said to Noah, Gen. 7, 1 : “ Come thou, and all thy house, in-

to the Ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me." 9, 9 : "And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you." And the apostle says, Heb. 11, 7 : "By faith, Noah being warned of God, prepared an Ark, to the saving of his house." And Peter, 1st Epist., 3, 20 : "When once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh,) but the answer of a good conscience toward God." By the like figure whereunto, The Ark, with the benefits and blessings connected with it, *was* a *type*, our baptism, the seal of God's gracious covenant, with the benefits and blessings connected with it, is the *antitype*, the like figure whereunto. And by the like figure whereunto, the same command, as was given to Noah, now rests upon every believing parent. God says, Come thou, and all thy house, by baptism, the sacred sign and seal between me and my people, into the Ark, the sacred enclosure, into the covenant of salvation. God would not receive Noah alone, neither will he receive us ; his family must enter in, so must our's : For God ever was, still is, and ever will be the God of families. We say then, take these three passages, viz : Gen. 7, 1, Heb. 11, 7, 1st Pet. 3, 20, as they stand in connexion, and the believer's duty, to bring in his children by baptism, is as plain as if written by sunbeams. But, my brother at my elbow, says, True baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God ; infants and children cannot have this, therefore they are not fit and proper subjects of baptism. I thank you, brother : But the true circumcision was, that of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter ; and yet, infants were the fit and proper subjects of it. Baptism signifies no more than circumcision ; and God himself has decided that infants were the fit and proper subjects of it. They may receive the outward sign of inward grace ; therefore, they may be baptized. In my turn, you will permit me to ask you one question, which is this : How do you get along with the figure, as to the mode of baptism ? The Ark surely was not dipped, plunged, immersed all over, &c., but we know it was sprinkled. I do not see that you in any respect act in conformity to the figure. Adult believers, you say, may enter

into the Ark, but their children must be excluded, and these must be received by immersion ; whereas, the figure, the type, the pattern, was by sprinkling. Let us then, for a moment, look back to some matters of fact, and see how truth and evidence, from different sources, harmonize together. When Zaccheus was converted, the Saviour said on the occasion, Luke 19, 9 : " This day is salvation come to this house, for he also is a son of Abraham." Can this import any thing less, than that the family, parents and children, now belong to the covenant made with Abraham ? And when the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, Acts 16, 14, and she was baptized, and her household, is not this evidently another case, of the same class ? And so, when the distressed Jail-er cried, What must I do (Acts 16, 14,) to be saved ? And the apostles said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine *house*. Could they mean any thing less than that his family should be brought into the covenant of Abraham ?

Let us, then, once more, look back to the Pentecost sermon : The promise, said Peter, earnestly and solemnly, is to you and your children ; yea, more, and to all that are afar off, all the Gentiles, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call, and to their children also. He must undeniably refer to some well known and distinguished promise, embracing parents and children. What could this be but God's special family promise, " I will be a God to you, and to your seed," which ran through all preceding dispensations, so often repeated to the patriarchs, to Noah, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, with a special regard to the gospel-dispensation, and the bringing in of all the Gentiles ? The whole course of the New-Testament instruction and practice, most clearly, and evidently too, proceeds on the same ground.—Privileges are not curtailed, but are now the same as ever.



## SECTION XII.

## THE TERM HOLY APPROPRIATED TO PERSONS, AND THINGS DEDICATED TO GOD.

The term *holy* is used in the scriptures, to designate persons and things religiously and visibly devoted to God, and separated to his service, as the Sabbath, the temple, the sacrifices, and all the people in covenant. Rom. 11, 16: "If the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy so are the branches," we have briefly considered before. One other *passage* where the word is expressly applied to believers' *children*, is often brought into this debate, and deserves particular notice in the present discussion.

1 Cor. 7, 12, 13, 14: "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman that hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children *unclean* but now are they *holy*." In other passages where this word is used, children are comprehended, but here it is applied to *them* distinctly. They are expressly denominated *holy* in consequence of having one believing parent.

Baptists have, with no small emotion, seen that this passage contains very decided evidence of the membership of believers' infants in the Christian church, because the word *holy* is an appropriate term for such, and if members of the visible church, then of course they must have received the covenant seal, and it must have been the practice of the apostles to baptize believers' children. And what is strange indeed, they have endeavored to maintain, that in this passage of scripture, *sanctified* means *married*, unclean illegitimate, and *holy* legitimate. This construction of the passage, we say is unnatural, and wholly inconsistent with the analogy of scripture.

I once asked a Baptist minister what the apostle meant when he declared the children of believers holy. "I suppose," said he, "that they were born in lawful wedlock." When the

same question was proposed to another, his reply was, "The parents were lawfully married." Another hastily said to me, "How do you consider it? Do you believe that regenerate parents can have regenerate children, as the consequence of being regenerate themselves?" I said "No; but there is a *sense* in which they are *holy*, and the apostle, no doubt, had a *meaning*, when he made the declaration." "And what," replied he, "do you suppose his meaning was?" "The same," I replied, "as when the word is used elsewhere in the bible, the same as when the Jews are called an holy nation, Levit. 19, 6, the same as when their children are called an 'holy seed,' Ezra, 9, 2—Isaiah 6, 18, because of their covenant relation with God, being a part of the Lord's visible people." He then replied, "Your sense of the passage would cut up our denomination, root and branch." I replied, "the truth must be maintained, let it cut whom it will or how it will."

The reader will now be presented with both sides of this debate, as far as it turns upon this passage of scripture. Dr. Gill, a Baptist writer, in his commentary on the bible on this passage, speaking of the parties, says: "They are duly, rightly, and legally espoused to each other. Otherwise, that is, if they were not truly married to each other, the children must be spurious and not legitimate; else were your children unclean but now are they holy; that is, if the marriage contracted between them was not valid, and if since the conversion of one of them, it can never be thought to be good, then the children begotten and born either when both of them were infidels, or since one of them is converted, must be unlawfully begotten, base born and not genuine offspring. But as the parties are lawfully married (that is, if one of the parties become a believer then) the children born of them are in a civil and legal sense *holy*, that is legitimate." One thing is very obvious; the *benefit* of which children partake, whether of a civil or a religious nature, is predicated on the condition, that one of the parents is a believer in Christ. If it be a civil benefit, then when one of the parents becomes a believer in Christ, the marriage which before was bad, now becomes good, which before was invalid, now becomes valid; the children which otherwise were unlawfully begotten, not a genuine legitimate offspring, base born and illegitimate, now be-



come lawfully begotten, a genuine, legitimate offspring, and in a civil and legal sense are holy. Monstrous absurdity !! Yet Mr. Tombs, Mr. Booth, Pengilly, and others, argue the same interpretation of this passage as Dr. Gill. From Mr. Pengilly's book, Boston edition, 1825, we extract the following : " The children are called *holy* in a civil sense, that is legitimate, not spurious. As if Paul had said, if your marriage were unlawful, your children would be illegitimate, but the former is not a fact therefore not the latter." Simply thus, if your marriage were unlawful, your children would be illegitimate, but since one of the parents, is a believer in Christ, the former is not true, and consequently not the latter. Mr. Pengilly proceeds, " I request my reader to observe, it is not said, the children are holy, because the believing, but because the unbelieving parent is sanctified, and as this sanctification can only be understood in a civil and legal sense, no more can that which flows from it, therefore the passage interprets itself." This is a more wonderful discovery still !! The poor children are saved from the guilt, the ignominy, and reproach of being base born, and in a civil and legal sense are holy, that is legitimate, not by means of the faith of the pious, believing parents, but by means of the sanctified unbeliever !!

Now then, with all the candor, and gravity, which the nature of the subject requires, it is asked, would it not be a very singular, strange and awkward way of describing the legality of the marriage state, and the legitimacy of children, by saying, " the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife by the husband ; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy ?" That is, else were your children spurious base born, illegitimate, but now as one of you is a believer the children are legitimate. Such a mode of expression is certainly unknown in the bible and in all codes of civil jurisprudence. But is there not an insurmountable difficulty here ? Upon this interpretation of the text, the legality of marriage is made to depend on *faith* in Christ, exercised by one of the persons married. If then the faith of one of the persons married, constitutes the legality of marriage, the lawfulness of cohabitation, and the legitimacy of children, does not the unavoidable consequence follow, (and who can not see it ?) that when neither of the persons mar-



ried is a believer in Christ, the marriage is illegal, cohabitation unlawful, and the children, as Dr. Gill says, base born, illegitimate, &c ? If this were the apostle's meaning, it would nullify the marriages, and bastardize the children, not only of heathen, but of a great part of the civilized world. Dr. Stennett, another Baptist writer, of much eminence, sees this difficulty, and openly exposes the sentiment. His words correspond with the remarks just made : " If one party's being a believer makes cohabitation lawful, it should seem to follow as a natural consequence, that when neither is a believer, cohabitation is unlawful, which is a proposition no one will maintain." But what Dr. Stennett acknowledges to be absurd, and strenuously opposes because of its glaring consequences, the others as we have seen, regardless of consequences, do endeavor as strenuously to maintain. Of such importance do they consider the argument from this passage, to our side of the question, that they run all hazards to wrest it from us, and in so doing, they betray strong conviction of its truth and force, in establishing the doctrine of infant baptism.

What then is marriage ? And when is it legal ? It is a civil institution, and consists in the parties, publicly and voluntarily, giving themselves to each other, and receiving each other in the relation of husband and wife, according to the legal custom of the country in which they live ; and it matters not whether such country be Christian or Heathen, Mahometan or Pagan. The marriage so performed is, to all intents and purposes, legal and valid ; and its legality or validity does not in the *least degree* depend on the *religious* character, either of one, or of both the parties.

There is still another difficulty. The word unclean, *akathartos* in the singular, *akatharta* in the plural, and the word holy, *agios* in the singular, *agia* in the plural, though they often occur in the scripture, are never used in a civil sense ; and our ablest opponents, as Dr. Gill and others, though in this passage they construe them in a civil sense, they do not pretend that they are ever so used in any other part of the bible. And further : The word which the apostle uses for an illegitimate child is *nothos*, as in Heb. 12, 8, and the proper word for a legitimate offspring is *gnesios*. And had the apostle intended such a sense as our brethren contend for, he would have used the words which, in the Greek writings,

are generally used in that sense, and not such as in the Septuagint ; and in the New-Testament, are always used to express and designate persons in covenant with God, or things separated for religious uses, but have no reference to the legitimacy or spuriousness of the birth.

We must, therefore, seek some other meaning from the words unclean *akatharta*, and holy *agia*, besides illegitimate and legitimate. Because, if both parents had been unbelievers, the children would be either illegitimate or legitimate, as their parents had, or had not, lawfully entered into the marriage relation.

The word *unclean*, in the scriptures, is applied to a part of the brute creation, which might not be offered to God, in sacrifice ; and for which reason, might not be eaten by God's people, during the dispensation of ceremonies. See Levit. 13, 45. It is also applied to the heathen universally, who are out of covenant, and separated from the church of God. Isaiah 35, 8 : "It shall be called the way of holiness, the unclean (that is, the idolatrous Gentiles) shall not pass over it." It is coupled with uncircumcised, and applied to the same people. Isaiah 52, 1 : "There shall not come unto thee, the uncircumcised and the unclean." And people, in covenant, are styled or denominated *holy*. Deut. 7, 6 : "Thou art an *holy* people to the Lord." 14, 2 ; 26, 19 : "That thou mightest be an *holy* people to the Lord." 28, 19 : "The Lord shall establish thee an *holy* people unto himself." Isaiah 62, 12 : "They shall call them the *holy* people." So also the seed, children, offspring, &c., of God's people, are denominated *holy*. Ezra, 9, 2 ; Isaiah 6, 13. So also things dedicated to the service of God, as the altar, the temple, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, are called holy : But especially, the word *holy* is an appropriate term, to distinguish the people of God in covenant, from Gentiles, Heathen and Pagans, not in covenant, and to whom the seal of the covenant might not be applied. In the before-mentioned passages of scripture, and many others, the word *holy* is applied to the people, or nation collectively, as much to children as to adults ; hence we know, that it is an *appropriate* term, for persons in covenant with God.

There was a question, in the Corinthian Church, whether believers under the christian dispensation, were required to



reject their wives or husbands, who were unbelievers. This question probably arose from a mistaken idea of the Jewish law, which forbade the *Jews* to marry with heathen ; and in case they did, they were required to reject both the wives and the children, which were born by them. This law is recorded, Deut. 7, 3, 4. Inheritance, also, was forbidden to pass from one tribe to another. Numb. 39, 7. By means of these restrictions, the Jews were the better able to keep the genealogies of their families, until the coming of the Saviour.

There was a famous case in the time of Ezra. Many of the Jews had taken heathen wives ; and, by some of them, they had had children. These wives, and these children, being not *holy*, must be put away. Ezra 9, 2 ; 10, 3, 44 : "For they have taken of their daughters, for themselves and for their sons, so that the *holy seed* have mingled themselves with the people of those lands." In these marriages they violated the express statute before mentioned, and of course the marriages were illegal, null and void ; not because one or both the parties were unbelievers, but because a *positive statute* was transgressed. They were also mingling the *holy seed*, the children of the covenant, with the heathen, who were unclean and out of covenant. The heathen wife, therefore, who had been married, in violation of an express law, must be put away, and also the children, because they were unholy and unclean.

But it was not so with the proselytes. Provision was made for them. Exodus 12, 48, 49. As we have before seen, they might come from any nation. And, what was required of them, is mentioned Isaiah 56, 6. The proselyte must join himself to the Lord, to serve him, and profess to love the name of the Lord. When the proselyte came and gave up himself to the Lord, his children were expressly required : "Let all his males be circumcised." In temporal things he had not the same privileges as Jews. He had no possession of inheritance in the land of Canaan. Neither was he restricted concerning his marriage, as the Jews were, concerning theirs. He might bring a wife from any nation, and was not required to put away either wife or children. But, in spiritual things, there was no difference. "One law (saith the sacred text) shall be to the stranger, and to the home born." The proselyte was equally with the Jews, in



the covenant made with Abraham, and was required to bring his children into covenant. "Let all his males be circumcised." He was, for himself and for his children, entitled to the great covenant promise, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed," and enjoyed the same communion with God, in worship and in ordinances, as the home-born. When these children had received the seal of the covenant, they were *holy* in the same sense as the children of the Jews were *holy*. So it was with the Gentile converts at Corinth. Their marriage was good. They had transgressed no law in that respect. If they had, they might not have been received into the church at all. The question to be settled, concerning these converts, was not about the legality of their marriage, nor the legitimacy of their children. This was settled by the civil authority, because it did not in the least degree depend on the religious character of the parties. It was acknowledged good by the church, when the believer was received, otherwise the church could not, with propriety, admit him to membership. This question arose, not from the circumstance that *both* parents were believers or unbelievers, but simply from the circumstance that one was a believer, and the other an unbeliever. It is, then, most clearly, *not* a civil, *but* a religious concern altogether. It was, whether the christian dispensation would, after *lawful marriage*, permit the cohabitation of a believer with an unbeliever? It is decided affirmatively, and the children stand in the same relation to the church, as if both parents were believers. They are declared *holy*. In a word, this question is decided exactly according to the manner in which the proselytes had ever been received and treated.

The apostle lays considerable stress on the expression, "be pleased." "If she be pleased to dwell with him." "If he be pleased to dwell with her." This supposes that the unbeliever, voluntarily, for the sake of the believer, renounced the society, the habits and customs of the heathen, and conformed, as far as an unbeliever could conform, to the society, the customs and virtues of Christians; and is, therefore, restrained from the heathen immoralities and vices, and is much influenced by his or her christian companion. Externally and morally, the unbeliever is much reformed. The believer has a great moral influence upon the unbeliever, so that the un-

believer, in his or her external deportment, is morally reformed and sanctified. The word is used in a similar manner elsewhere. John 17, 11 : "Sanctify them, through thy truth ; thy word is truth." Let thy truth have its moral influence upon them, to enlighten, to persuade, to restrain, and guide them. 1st Tim. 4, 5 : "It is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." So he may be by religious conversation, in conformity to the word of God, and accompanied by prayer and pious examples. So also, 1st Thes. 4, 3, abstaining from fornication, and from incontinency, is expressly called sanctification.

You are not, says the apostle, to reject from the marriage relation, your unbelieving wife, or husband, who is pleased to separate from the society of heathen, and conform to his or her believing partner, in a christian society, and conform to the christian morality ; and who, in his or her external deportment, through the influence of the believing correlate, is already sanctified. That this is the sense, is further evident from the 16th verse : "How knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband ? and how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife ? As you have thus happily succeeded, in influencing your unbelieving husband, to forsake the company of heathens, and conform to the christian morality, and attend to the use of means, how do you know but God may so bless your faithful endeavors, your chaste conversation and pious examples ; may so hear and answer your prayers, that you may be the happy instrument of his final salvation ? Blessed endeavor ! This sense is further confirmed, by the expression, "But if the unbelieving *will* depart, let him depart." In that case, there is *no* sanctification. The unbeliever is sanctified only when he or she continues and conforms to the believer. But whether the unbeliever goes or stays, it does not alter the case with the children ; they are declared *holy*.

Again : Mr. Pengilly says, "I request my reader to observe, it is not said the children are *holy*, because the believing, but because the unbelieving parent is sanctified." And so say the others, as far as I know, except Dr. Stennett. According to them, benefits result to children, not from a believer, but from a sanctified unbeliever. Nothing more is necessary, to confute this erroneous and visionary idea, than



this. Benefits and blessings flow from faith. "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, concerning things to come." Heb. 11, 20. The benefit then, which is derived to the children, is not from the unbeliever, but from the believer. Whether the unbeliever remain and be *sanctified*, or *depart* and go to the heathen society *unsanctified*, makes no difference with the children. Their covenant relation with God and the church, is only from the faith of the believer. They are *holy*. Lydia's household were baptized upon her faith, and the Jail-er's upon his.

The following remarks on this text, are confined to the words, *unclean* and *holy* :—The word *holy*, is used nearly six hundred times in the bible, in the sense we contend for, and in no instance in the sense our brethren contend for. They themselves do not pretend, that it is used in a single instance, in the sense in which they say it is used in this text. We say, it is used nearly six hundred times ; and its correspondent terms, circumcised and clean, and its opposite terms unholy, uncircumcised, unclean, &c., nearly so many times more. The use of the word then in this text : "Else were your children unclean," *akatharta*, a word ever applied to beasts and to things which might not be separated, to God, and to heathen, though lawfully married, but not in covenant with God : but now are they *holy*, *agia*, the appropriate term for things and for beasts, which might be separated to God, and for people in covenant relation with God. These being appropriate terms, and here distinctly and definitely applied to *children*, is, to say the least, satisfactory evidence that the children here spoken of were in covenant, and had received the covenant seal ; and that it was the invariable practice of the apostles to baptize the children of believers, especially when the sense is taken in connexion with all preceding dispensations, and with the prophecies concerning the present dispensation.

The reader will now be presented with the following *rule*, to know the meaning of words : "We are not to forsake the genuine and natural signification of words, unless there is evidence that the author did otherwise intend them, saith the civil law."

"And saith St. Austin, The *proper* signification of words, is always to be retained, unless necessity enforce us to ex-



pound them otherwise. What better evidence can we have, of the sense of a place, than that, had the author intended such a meaning, he could have used no plainer expression to declare it?"

Now, if St. Paul meant to speak in the sense our brethren contend for, he had words, ready at hand, *nothoi* and *gnesioi*, the proper meaning of which would have expressed it; but if it was his intention to declare the covenant interest of children, he has used words which, in their genuine and natural signification, and known acceptation, did unequivocally express it. The argument then, will stand thus: If the constant sense and meaning of the word *holy* be for a separation to God, then we must understand it so here, except there be a palpable necessity for understanding it otherwise. But, the constant sense and meaning of the word *holy*, is for a *separation* to God, and there is no palpable necessity for understanding it otherwise: therefore, we must understand it so here. The premises, no one can deny—the conclusion, no one can evade. Six hundred instances, in the sense we contend for, and none in the other. Six hundred to *one*, it is not; but six hundred to *none*; and its correspondent terms clean, circumcised, &c.; and its opposite terms unclean, unholy, uncircumcised, in a great many more. Who, then, can entertain a shadow of doubt? The explanation of this passage, as it is given by some of our ablest divines and commentators, will now be subjoined:

CALVIN.—“The children of the Jews, because they were made heirs of the covenant, and distinguished from the children of the impious, are called an holy seed. And for the same reason, the children of Christians, even when only one of the parents is pious, are accounted *holy*; and, according to the testimony of the apostle, differ from the impure seed of idolaters.”

DR. WHITBY.—“He doth not say, else were your children bastards, but now are they legitimate; but else were they unclean, that is, heathen children, and not to be owned as the *holy seed*. That this is the true import of the words *akatharta* and *agias*, will be apparent from the scriptures, in which the heathen are styled the unclean, in opposition to the Jews in covenant with God, and therefore styled an unholy people.”

DR. GUISE.—“The terms *akathartos*, unclean, and *agios*,

holy, occur almost numberless times in the septuagint and New-Testament ; but I dont know that they are ever once used to signify illegitimate and legitimate, which is the sense some would here put upon them ; and as the apostle was speaking of persons already married, and marriage is a civil ordinance of the God of nature, there was no room to doubt whether the children of such unbelieving and believing parents were legitimate or not. Since that depends entirely on the legitimacy of the marriage, and not on the religious character of the husband and wife, whether one or both, or neither of them, were christians or no."

DR. DODRIDGE.—"On the maturest and most impartial deliberation and consideration, I must judge the words refer to infant baptism. Nothing can be more apparent, than that the word *holy*, signifies persons who might be admitted to partake of the distinguished rites of God's people." Concerning the legitimacy, or illegitimacy of children, he says : "This is an unscriptural sense of the word, and the argument will by no means bear it."

MATTHEW HENRY.—"*He* is to be reputed clean, who is one flesh with her that is *holy*, and *vice versa*." "Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." That is, they would be heathen, out of the pale of the church and covenant of God. They would not be of the holy seed, as the Jews were called, Isaiah 6, 13, but common and unclean, in the same sense, as heathen in general are styled in the apostle's vision. Acts 10, 28. This way of speaking is according to the dialect of the Jews, among whom a child begotten by parents yet heathen, was said to be begotten out of holiness ; and a child begotten of parents made proselytes, is said to be begotten *intra sanctitatem*, within the holy enclosure. Thus Christians are commonly styled saints, *agioi*. Such they are by profession, separated, to be a peculiar people of God, and as such are distinguished from the world.—And therefore, children born of Christians, though married to unbelievers, are not to be reckoned as part of the world, but of the church, an holy, and not a common and unclean seed."

DR. CLARK.—"Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." If this kind of relative sanctification were not allowed, the children of these parents could not be received into the Christian church, nor enjoy the rights and



privileges of *Christians*. But the church of God never scrupled to admit such children as members (that is, by baptism) just as well as she did those sprung from parents, both of whom were christians. The Jews considered a child born out of holiness, whose parents were not proselytes, at the time of the birth, though afterward they became proselytes. On the other hand, they considered the children of heathens born in holiness, provided the parents became proselytes before the birth. All the children of heathens were reputed *unclean* by the Jews, and their own children *holy*. See Dr. LIGHTFOOT. This shews clearly what the apostle's meaning is."

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## SECTION XIII.

CHILDREN OF BELIEVING JEWS, WERE CIRCUMCISED  
UNDER THE MINISTRY OF THE APOSTLES, AND BY  
THE DIRECTION OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Our brethren commonly say, "When baptism was instituted, circumcision was abrogated and discontinued." In this however they greatly err. It was neither abrogated nor discontinued, but used by the believing Jews in the church at Jerusalem as extensively as ever before.

In the 15th chapter of Acts we are informed, that certain persons came from Judea to Antioch, a Gentile city, and urged the Gentile converts there to use the former seal, saying, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye can not be saved," can not have a regular standing in the visible church and covenant of God. The case was this. These Gentiles at Antioch had been baptized, and must they also be circumcised? This was the question. In other words, was their baptism of itself sufficient? The men from Judea said it was not. Paul and Barnabas, who at this time were present, supposed it was, and had no small *dissention* and *disputation* with them, but were not able to produce any authority sufficient to settle the controversy. It



was therefore sent up to Jerusalem where a council of apostles and elders, the highest ecclesiastical tribunal ever known *in the church of Christ*, was called to decide this plain and simple question: Must the baptized Gentiles be circumcised? And the council, it seems, could not readily decide upon it, but after much deliberation and disputation, Peter said, "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago, God made choice among us, that the Gentiles, by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe, and God which knoweth the hearts bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, as he did unto us, and put no difference between them and us." Peter here refers to Cornelius and his family. He reminds the council that the Holy Ghost did not require of them circumcision but baptism only, and by tokens not to be misunderstood, acknowledged their standing by baptism the same as that of the Jews by circumcision, "putting," says he, "no difference between them and us." This was an argument from fact, and to the purpose. Paul and Barnabas, also declare like testimony of the Holy Ghost, among the Gentiles where they had labored. James also speaks in his turn. He could not testify from matter of fact, as others had done, having labored only among the Jews, but he was well acquainted with the prophecies, and draws his conclusions from them. "Men and brethren," said James, "hearken unto me, Simeon (Simon Peter) hath declared how God did at the first visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name, and to this agree the words of the prophets." He then quoted a passage from Amos 9, 12, which foretold the conversion of the Gentiles, and the calling of the Lord's name upon them. This being done in their baptism, he concludes it to be sufficient without circumcision. This also was the conclusion of the council, and so the Holy Ghost did approve and sanction their decision. They say, "It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost and to us." The conclusion was, circumcision need not, and should not be administered to the baptized Gentiles.

Here observe again, the question at Antioch, and also before the council at Jerusalem, was concerning the Gentiles distinctly, and the result of the council was concerning them distinctly. There was no question concerning the propriety, legality, or the divine right which the believing Jews had to use it.

How then would this business have stood if circumcision had been abrogated and disallowed to the believing Jews at Jerusalem? Would the men from Judea have had the face to propose, and urge it upon the Gentile converts at Antioch? And would not Paul and Barnabas have been able at once to put them to silence by stating the fact that circumcision was abrogated and not allowed in the church at Jerusalem? Most clearly they would. Or could it have been made a question before the council at Jerusalem? Truly, it could not. What! circumcision abrogated and disallowed to the believing Jews at Jerusalem, and then made an interesting question and of long debate before this grave and solemn council, whether it should be required of the Gentiles? No such thing. The very nature of this case carries irresistible conviction along with it, that circumcision was *not* abrogated, but still in use in the church at Jerusalem.

And who does not at once see that the result of the council, in deciding that circumcision was not necessary for the baptized Gentiles, is an acknowledgment that the Gentiles, by baptism, had the same standing, in the church as the Jews by circumcision?

Again: We find further evidence of the same fact, that is, of the continuance of circumcision, in the 21st chapter of the Acts, where we have an account of Pauls returning to Jerusalem after he had travelled extensively in heathen or Gentile cities. He found the apostles and elders of the church, to whom he communicated the knowledge of his success, and who rejoiced.

At this time, however, his enemies had spread a report, unfavorable to his character as an apostle. It was, that he had taught all the Jews living in Gentile cities (and they were numerous) that they ought *not* to circumcise their children. When Paul had conversed with James and the elders, they were satisfied that the report was not true. They intimated to him, however, that the church at Jerusalem would not easily be satisfied. It is said, verse 20th, "When they heard it, (his success) they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, thou seest brother how many thousands of the Jews there are, which believe and are all zealous of the law" (that is, are tenacious of the covenant of which circumcision is the seal, and of the privilege of bringing their children into it) "and they



are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews that are among the Gentiles, that they ought to forsake Moses, saying they ought not to *circumcise* their children, and walk after the customs." James informed Paul that the multitude of believers was so disturbed, that they must needs come together, and know about the matter, importing that they could have no fellowship with him until they had satisfactory evidence that the report was totally unfounded. James further says to Paul, "As touching the *Gentiles* which believe, we have *before* written and concluded that *they* observe no such thing." He carefully keeps up the distinction between the believing Jews and Gentiles. He readily acknowledges, that with regard to the Gentiles, the matter had been settled by a decree of council: but that decree had no bearing upon the practice, of the believing Jews, but was to them indirectly a confirmation that it was the will of God they should continue to use the former seal, and enjoy the privilege of bringing their children into covenant with God, in the same manner as they had ever done before. They knew it to be the seal of God's covenant, and his own institution. They preferred it, and were indulged in their choice. James advises Paul, what would satisfy the multitude, &c. saying: "That all may know that the things whereof they are informed of thee are nothing, (untrue) but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law." This advice was for him to take upon him the vow of the Nazarite, and under the solemnity of that vow declare the report not true. Paul does it, and they are satisfied. Hence it is evident, that not only in the church at Jerusalem, but in all countries, the children of believing Jews were dedicated to God by the former seal.

We further see in what light infant dedication was viewed in the apostolic age. To acknowledge and practice it was to walk orderly, and to deny it was to walk disorderly. It is further evident that the divine wisdom did not see fit to change the seal of the covenant suddenly, but gradually, so that believing Jews might have clear and full demonstration that *baptism* answered the same ends, and was a seal of the same covenant as circumcision, before they were required to leave off using the former seal.

Several things are worthy of further notice, as,

1. The time when these matters were transacted. The



decree of the council mentioned, Acts 15, was about nineteen, and Paul's return to Jerusalem, mentioned Acts 21, was about twenty-seven years after the ascension of Christ to his glory. During this period the church at Jerusalem had been constant and zealous in the practice of giving up their children to God, and had observed the former seal.

2. The multitude of believers, in the church at Jerusalem. "Thou seest brother how many thousands of the Jews there are which believe." The original word *muriades* properly signifies *ten thousands*. Thou seest brother how many ten thousands of the Jews there are which believe. Here were the clearest evidences that God remembered his holy covenant, the oath which he swore unto Abraham, and to Isaac, and confirmed the same unto Jacob, for an everlasting covenant. Here were the brightest displays of his grace. Here were the most copious influences of his spirit. Here literally and here spiritually was Mount Zion, the city of the living God. God would not punish his people for that dreadful crime of crucifying his Son, until he had shewn them that "where sin abounded grace should much more abound." Thus we read, Acts 2, 41 : "And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." 4, 4 : "And the number of the men was about five thousand. 4, 32 : "And the multitude of them that believed." 6, 7 : "And a great company of the priests became obedient unto the faith." 19, 20 : "So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed." "So numerous was the Christian church at Jerusalem." 21, 20 : "So many ten thousands."

3. They were, as we have seen, all constant and zealous in the practice of infant circumcision. Were there time we would here state the remarks and observations of many eminent and able divines on this subject. It will be sufficient however, to notice those of that great and good man, Dr. Wert. Speaking of the believing Jews, he says, "They were as fond, as tenacious of infant circumcision, as their brethren, the unbelieving Jews, and the Holy Ghost did not discountenance their continuance in the practice of it." Again he says, "That which gave such general uneasiness was the apprehension that Paul had forbidden the circumcision of children." No one who attentively reads these two chapters of the Acts, viz : the 15th and 21st, can fail to see

clear and convincing proof of the fact before mentioned.

4. This great church at Jerusalem, where infants were universally devoted to God and circumcised, was under the stated ministry of the apostle James, and the occasional ministry of all the apostles. In this church difficulties and hard questions from other churches, and other countries were brought and settled.

Further : according to the promise of Christ, John 16, 7, 13, the special agency of the Holy Ghost was present with the apostles to direct them in their proceedings, to preside over their deliberations and councils, and lead them into all truth. Hence we read, Acts 13, 2 : " The Holy Ghost said, separate me, Barnabas, and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them." Verse 4 : " Being sent forth of the Holy Ghost. Chap. 16, 6 : " Were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." So in this question concerning circumcision, the Holy Ghost did guide and direct them, chap. 15, 28 : " It seemed good unto the *Holy Ghost*, and unto us," the apostles and elders, not to require it of the baptized Gentiles which was an approval of it among the Jews. Hence the just and certain conclusion that the continuance of it in the church at Jerusalem was no error. The Holy Ghost could not err. But to neglect putting the covenant seal upon the children, would have been a material error. Thou teachest them to forsake Moses, *apostasian*, literally apostacy from Moses. They require Paul to satisfy the church, that this report was untrue, and that he himself also walked orderly, and kept the law. To deny circumcision to the children of believing Jews was to walk disorderly.

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## SECTION XIV.

### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

5. The special business of the council, was to correct the views and regulate the practice of the churches, with regard to the external seals of the covenant. The believing Jews, as we have seen, retained their attachment to the for-



mer seal and were indulged in their choice. And baptism, though instituted by the Saviour, was not estimated in the churches according to its divine appointment, until the decision of this august and solemn council of apostles and elders, over which the Holy Ghost did immediately preside. The council left circumcision as the Saviour did, without saying any thing against it. It is however implied, that as the Holy Ghost did decide where it should *not* be used, so he did virtually direct, where and to what extent it should be used, that is in the church of Jerusalem. The question was fully settled, as it concerned the *Gentiles*, with regard to the validity and sufficiency of baptism alone, for covenant standing. It was considered as having the same meaning, and answering the same end, for the Gentiles, as circumcision for the Jews and the Gentiles, by baptism, were placed on the same standing as the Jews by circumcision. The apostle James says to St. Paul, Acts 21, 24 : "As touching the *Gentiles* which believe, we have before written and concluded that *they* observe no such thing." Mark the distinction which he makes and maintains between the believing Jews and believing Gentiles. "As touching the *Gentiles* which believe, we have written and concluded that *they* observe no such thing." From this passage much is to be inferred. Its fair construction is, that the Gentiles were not only released from, but were required not to use circumcision.

In building up the christian church, by their preaching, their précepts and their practice, the apostles evidently made the *decrees* of the council the rule of their proceeding : And in conformity to this high and venerable authority, Paul circumcised Timothy. Acts 16, 3. His mother it seems was a member of the Jewish church, and his father, being a Gentle, had most likely opposed his being circumcised in his infancy, but still he was a proper subject for that ordinance. And it is worthy of remark, further, that this was done immediately after the *rising* of that council, whose decrees on the subject Paul had with him, and was going to carry them to the Gentile churches. Timothy was not excluded by these decrees, and his ministry would be more acceptable to the Jews, when he bore the same seal of the covenant which they themselves used. This proceeding, together with the apostle's subsequent conduct in treating the same subject, is



a practical exposition of the doings of that high and venerable council.

It is also evident, that Timothy was never baptized, because if he had been before baptized, he might not now have been circumcised. The decrees of the council would have prohibited him. He was received into the church, not by baptism, but by circumcision. This single transaction, at this time and under these circumstances speaks, a language neither to be denied nor misunderstood. Jewish converts of adult age, as well as the infants of believing Jews, were received by circumcision.

But the same apostle in a decisive manner refused to circumcise Titus. Gal. 2, 8. And why was this? Titus was a Gentile, without any connection with the church at Jerusalem, and as he had been a companion with Paul in his travels previous to this, we may reasonably conclude that he was a member of the church, and had been previously baptized. Evidently then, for the same reason as Paul did so *readily* circumcise Timothy, he did so *decidedly* refuse to circumcise Titus, viz : conformity to the decrees of the council. And for the same reason as he refused to circumcise Titus, he was so pointedly against it, in his epistle to the Galatians, 5th chapter : "If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing." They were Gentiles—had been baptized, and the decrees of the council prohibited them from being circumcised. But to the Jews, the apostle ever held a different language. For instance : when writing to the church at Rome, which consisted partly of Jews and partly of Gentiles, he says to the Jews, Chap. 2, 25 : "Circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law." This is in the present time. He does not say it did once profit, but it profiteth now. The expression too is highly emphatical. It verily profiteth if thou keep the law. Not the ceremonial law, nor simply the moral law, but the law or obligation of the covenant of which circumcision was a seal. This had ever been required of the circumcised, and was what every moral agent could keep. Again, after he had stated the fullness of God's grace, to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, he says, 3, 1 : You Jews will say, "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there (not was there once) of circumcision?" The apostle replies, "Much every way but chiefly (that is in one way

above all others) because, that unto them, (the circumcised) are committed the oracles of God." The word of life, instituted ordinances, the means of salvation and covenant promises. He says further, 15, 8 : "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." And more he goes on to say, "Is he the God of the Jews only ? Is he not of the Gentiles also ? Here and every where the Gentiles by baptism and the Jews by circumcision stand upon the same level.

6. It is evident from undeniable fact as well as from many arguments, that the gospel dispensation did not change nor alter the membership of infants in the visible church : as they were included with their parents in the law and covenant of nature, and in all previous revealed dispensations of God's covenant of grace, so the uniform and unvaried practice of the church at Jerusalem, guided and enlightened by the apostles and the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost, shews the membership of infants to be the same, under the gospel dispensation, as ever before. Hence the irresistible argument in favor of infant baptism. Because, if the infants of believing Jews were brought in, by the former seal, and baptism of itself was, by the council considered valid and sufficient for the Gentiles, the conviction we say is irresistible that the infants of believing Gentiles were included with their parents and baptized. Otherwise there must have been a strange incoherence and want of uniformity in the primitive church, which we cannot believe.

The same distinction continued through the apostolic age. The believing Jews used the former, and the believing Gentiles the latter seal. Hence the church at Jerusalem is so often called the *circumcision*, and the baptized Gentiles the *uncircumcision*, Eph. 2, 11 ; Rom. 3, 30 : "Seeing it is one God which shall justify the *circumcision* by faith, and the *uncircumcision* through faith." Again the apostle saith, "the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter. For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles." God did own, bless, and pardon, justify and save the one equally as the other. We before observed that God did not change the covenant seal suddenly. We will here quote the



words of Robert Hall, an eminent, open communion Baptist writer. On this subject, he says, "The wisdom of God in the arrangement of successive dispensations seems averse to sudden and violent innovations, rarely introducing new rites without incorporating something of the old." His idea is, that for a length of time circumcision, as well as baptism, was used in the Christian church as the seal of the covenant. Again he says, "Who baptized the apostles and the hundred and twenty disciples assembled with them at the day of Pentecost? My deliberate opinion is, that in the Christian sense of the term they were not baptized at all."

7. The baptism of some Jews, especially at the day of Pentecost, does nothing to disprove the fact, that infant circumcision universally prevailed and for so long a time; neither does it in the least degree militate against the argument drawn from infant circumcision in favor of infant baptism. According to credible writers of antiquity it had ever been a custom among the Jews to administer a ceremonial baptism or purification, to persons who returned by repentance, and confession of their sins, after having back-slidden, or been guilty of heinous offences. Such characters John baptized; and such were those baptized at Pentecost. Peter charges them with the murder of Christ, and as they had been forward in crying "crucify him, crucify him," saying, "Let his blood be on us and on our children," so now if they might receive forgiveness in his name, it was proper that in his name both they, and their children should receive baptism, the ordinance which had been appointed, as the future token of the covenant and symbol of the sinner's cleansing, purification, and forgiveness. And there would be a peculiar propriety in baptizing the children, that they might have comfortable evidence of being freed from that dreadful curse which their parents had imprecated upon them. So also Saul of Tarsus was a bitter persecutor of Christ and his church, and it was proper that he, upon repentance should be baptized in the name of that Jesus whom he had so cruelly persecuted. But it does not appear that baptism was used, among the Jews any further than for such characters as we have now mentioned, and the evidence is abundant that they did constantly and universally continue to use the former seal.

The fact that the former seal was used in the church at Je-



Jerusalem is admitted by many of our opponents, but they would feign think it was either wrong or else indifferent, like some other Jewish customs, and tolerated by the apostles, for the sake of keeping up a friendly intercourse with the unbelieving Jews. We say no. If, under the Christian dispensation, it was wrong, it would not have been allowed at all. And most clearly, it was not used for the sake of keeping up a friendly intercourse with the unbelieving Jews. Paul was not required to satisfy the unbelieving Jews, but the church, the many thousands, the multitude of believers at Jerusalem. And if it had been an indifferent ceremony, like abstinence from meats, shaving the head, or the vow and offering of the Nazarite, which was not a typical offering, but a thanksgiving then for peace sake, Paul might have circumcised Titus, as well as Timothy; and for peace sake too he might have recommended it to the Gentiles at Galatia.

Neither is it an objection to the argument, in favor of infant baptism, drawn from infant circumcision, that the apostles in some instances did comply with some Jewish customs, for these compliances were only occasional; whereas the observance of infant circumcision was general and constant, during the known existence of that church, which constituted a period of nearly forty years, and this under the authority before mentioned.

Again: How did this vast body of pious, believing Jews, consider and receive it? this whole church at Jerusalem, which for christian knowledge and piety, stood pre-eminently above all other churches? Did they not consider and receive it, as the sacred seal of God's most holy and most gracious covenant, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers? sealing God's inviolable truth, that he is, and ever will be a faithful covenant God, to parents, and to their seed? If it did not so signify, they were trifled with, they were imposed upon, they were awfully deceived. Did then the apostles, to whom was committed the sacred trust of building up the christian church, nay did the Holy Ghost himself continue this seal of the covenant, to trifle with, to impose upon, and to deceive them? Impossible! No absurdity could be greater, than to suppose this sacred seal of God's everlasting covenant, was now continued for any thing short of its true and original meaning and design.

But, my brother says, "If the believing Jews did so extensively, and for so long a time, use the former seal, was it not a mere legal service, a bondage under the law, and wholly inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel? Else why doth the apostle connect the keeping of the law with circumcision? Solve me this difficulty, and I am satisfied." Patience, my brother, and the whole truth shall be unfolded. You know that *not* a legal righteousness, but grace, free grace, was ever the burden of the apostle's preaching, and doubtless he was consistent with himself. This also, you know, "That faith doth not make void the law." Rom. 3, 31. Though it can neither save nor justify, it must be submitted to as a rule of duty. And this also, you will easily understand, that the sum of all moral virtue, moral excellence, and moral obligation, consists in conformity to the divine perfections; or, in other words, obedience to the divine will. Hence, in the scriptures, the sum of all religion is so often expressed, by being holy, by loving God with all the heart, by being obedient to his law, by keeping his commandments, &c. When God established his covenant with Abraham, he said unto him, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." To his covenant people, he said, Levit. 11, 44: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Quoted 1st Pet. 1, 15, as being equally binding on the church, under the gospel, as under the former dispensation: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy, because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy." The same is expressed by obedience, 1st Sam. 15, 22: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." So again, Peter addressing christians, to whom he wrote, says, 1st Epist. 1, 22: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth." This holiness, this love of God, this conformity to the divine perfections, this dutiful obedience to our heavenly Father's will is, when it is the fruit of faith in Christ, the basis of all union, communion and fellowship with God.

Circumcision, therefore, was a *sign*, a new heart or disposition to love God supremely, to keep and obey his revealed will, was one important thing signified by the sign, or which the sign did signify. As an instituted ordinance, it was a seal of covenant relation with God, binding and obliging the circumcised, to a performance of the duties signified.

The many thousands in the church at Jerusalem, were all zealous of the law, as a rule of duty, and required even St. Paul, to satisfy them that he also walked orderly and kept the *law*. Not the ceremonial law, that was abrogated ; but they were zealous of that moral purity, which circumcision signified, and which it obliged them to observe. And being zealous for what was *signified*, they were strenuous for the *sign* also.

As we noticed before, the apostle, in his epistle to the church at Rome, which consisted partly of Jews and partly of Gentiles, says to the Jews, chap. 2, 25 : "Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law," as a rule of duty.—Here, obedience is required, which is the thing signified by the outward sign. To the church at Corinth, which consisted of similar members, he says, 1st Epist. 7, 19 : "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." To the church at Galatia, in similar circumstances, he says, chap. 5, 6 : "For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." 6, 15 : "For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing but a new creature."

Being zealous of the law, keeping the commandments of God, faith which worketh by love, a new creature, &c., are different expressions, amounting to the same thing, viz : the thing signified, by the external seal of the covenant ; and the thing signified, was so much above the *sign*, that in comparison of the thing signified, or without the thing signified, the sign was nothing. Rom. 2, 28 : "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly. Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh : But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." So also in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the bread and the wine are symbols ; but in comparison of the things signified, or symbolized by them, they are nothing.

Lastly : As circumcision was God's institution, its tendency was towards good. Coming from God, it could be no otherwise, and important things were connected with it. In this light, let us again take a view of the passage noticed just now. Rom. 2, 25 : "Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou



keep the law.” 3, 1 : “What advantage hath the Jew ? or, what profit is there of circumcision ? Much, every way ; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” Covenant promises, instituted ordinances, and appointed means of salvation, are called, Acts 7, 38, “The lively oracles.” These, ordinarily, were accompanied by the influences of God’s spirit, and were channels in which his grace flowed freely, and copiously, to his people. It was then profitable, and a blessing to be born within the limits of God’s visible church, to be born under that gracious covenant promise : “I will be a God to thee and to thy seed.” “I will pour my spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thine offspring.”

These privileges and blessings, are rarely appreciated, by christians at the present day, as they ought to be. In the scriptures, however, they are set forth in their proper light. Luke 15, 31 : “Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.” Rom. 9, 4 : “Who are Israelites to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.” These were for substance, the oracles committed.—And rightly improved, were of unspeakable advantage to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile : but misimproved, were an aggravation of their sin.

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## SECTION XV.

### CIRCUMCISION NO PART OF THE CEREMONIAL LAW.

Baptists are exceedingly troubled with the covenant established with Abraham. They have sometimes said it was a covenant of works ; but not being able to maintain that ground, they have said, it was typical ; and finding no scripture to support them in this, they have then endeavored to make it appear, that it was annexed to the ceremonial dispensation, and incorporated with it. And if they can get rid of the seal, they seem to think they can get rid of the covenant also. Elder Merrill, a Baptist writer, and popular with that

denomination, says, page 67 : "It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law was to continue no longer. The covenant of circumcision appears to be annexed to this law." Page 68 : "It is hence plain, that the ceremonial law is no longer in being, and that the covenant of circumcision, which was incorporated with it, hath passed away." The law of ceremonies, we all know, was designed to continue only until the death of Christ. We have no dispute here. But to say, that the covenant, of which circumcision was the seal, was annexed to that law, was incorporated with it, and with it hath passed away, is, to say the least, *palpably* absurd. When two things are spoken of, which are distinct in point of order, or distant in point of time, nothing is more inconsistent than to say, that the former is annexed to the latter, or incorporated with the latter. Concerning the typical dispensation, we know it must end in the death of Christ. When the antitype had come, the type could be of no longer use, and the apostle expressly tells us, Eph. 2, 15, that it is "abolished." Colos. 2, 14, that "it is blotted out, taken away, nailed to the cross of Christ." A great part of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is taken up in shewing the end, the full accomplishment and removal of the typical dispensation. In the course of this and his other epistles, the apostle mentions in particular every thing of a typical nature, as the passover, the offering of beasts, the sprinkling of blood, the legal purifications, the priesthood, &c. But, in the clearest manner possible, the apostle decides the point now under consideration. Gal. 3, 17 : "And this, I say, that the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." Here is positive testimony that the covenant which God established with Abraham, of which circumcision was the seal, was confirmed of God in Christ ; that the ceremonial or typical dispensation was another thing distinctly, was four hundred and thirty years after, could not disannul, nor change, nor alter, nor in the least degree affect the covenant which was the same after as before the giving of the law, or the typical dispensation. If, then, the *giving* of the law of ceremonies could not affect the covenant, nor its seal, most clearly the *taking* away of the law could not. This would only leave the covenant, with its seal, as it was

before the law was given. We have no intimation, in any part of the scriptures, that this seal of the covenant was typical, or a part of the ceremonial law, or that it signified more to the Jews, than baptism to the Gentiles. The Bible informs us, that it was

“A token of the covenant;”

“A sign of circumcision;”

That is, of the circumcision of the heart, or regeneration;

“A seal of the righteousness of faith,” &c.

But, we say, the Bible never even intimates that it was typical of Christ. And, what is perfectly conclusive, is this: If it had been ceremonial, or typical of Christ, it could not have been continued, in the christian church, under the new dispensation.

## SECTION XVI.

CIRCUMCISION AND BAPTISM, EXHIBIT EQUAL BLESSINGS, AND CONFER EQUAL OBLIGATIONS.

To the circumcised, God proposed himself as their *supreme good*—their covenant God. “I will be a God to thee and to thy seed.” But the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, Gen. 12, 3, are the promised seed. Rom. 9, 8: “Are counted for the seed.” Rom. 4, 16; Gal. 3, 27; 4, 28: “Are the seed, to whom the promises are sure.” It is, then, easy to understand, that baptism succeeds circumcision, and is to the Gentiles, the sign, token, and seal, of the same covenant—being baptized, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. God is, if possible, exhibited to us, in a manner still more luminous and glorious, as our Supreme Good, our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier—in a word, our covenant God. Hence, the obligation to the circumcised, and to the baptized, to receive and acknowledge God as their Supreme Good, their covenant God.

2. Another blessing, exhibited in circumcision, was cove-



nant *relation* to God. The blessed God takes us, guilty, unworthy creatures, into a near and visible covenant relation with himself. The circumcised were the Lord's people. Levit. 20, 26 : "And ye shall be holy unto me ; for I, the Lord your God, am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be *mine*." Ezek. 16, 8 : "I swear unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord, and thou becamest *mine*." Abraham, and his seed, were required to use circumcision, as the visible token that God was their covenant God, and they his covenant people. He their father, and they his children. And, by this token of the covenant, they were under obligation to perform the duties correspondent to such a relation. Baptism also signifies the same covenant relation to God : "God is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also." "Baptizing them, said the Saviour, *eis onoma*, into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." So the same word, Rom. 6, 3, Gal. 3, 27, is rendered *into*. "Baptized *into* Christ," &c. It clearly and evidently imports the same covenant relation, with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and brings us under the same obligation, to perform the duties correspondent to such a relation. Or, in other words, we stand in the same union and covenant relation with God by baptism, as the Jews by circumcision, and have the same encouragement to "cry, Abba, Father."

3. Circumcision was the visible sign of grace, wrought by the special agency of the Holy Spirit, in renewing and cleansing the heart, and in taking away corrupt propensities, vile affections, and every thing offensive in the sight of God—in a word, regeneration. Deut. 30, 6 : "I will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, that thou mayest live." Ezek. 36, 26 : "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." Rom. 2, 28 : "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh ; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly ; and circumcision is that of the *heart*, in the spirit, and not in the letter ; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Baptism, also, signifies the same. He is not a christian, who is one outwardly ; neither is that baptism, which is outward, on the flesh. But he is a christian, who is one inwardly ; and bap-

tism is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. External baptism is a sign of grace in the heart. John 3, 5 : "Except a man (*tis* any one) be born of the water, and of the spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 1st Cor. 12, 13 : "By one spirit, we are all baptized into one body." And Titus 3, 5 : "According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." These, and other passages, so clearly exhibit baptism as the symbol of the operation of the spirit in the renewing of the heart, that the ancient Fathers often call it *paliggenesia*, regeneration, only because it is the sign or symbol of it. Both ordinances signify in this respect the same thing.

4. Circumcision signified the *obligation* that every circumcised person was under, to repent of his sins, to circumcise his heart to the Lord. Deut. 10, 16 : "Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your hearts." Jer. 4, 4 : "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your hearts." This is repentance, which the covenant seal signified, and bound them to. Baptism signifies and obliges to the same. Every display of divine goodness obliges a sinful creature to repentance. Rom. 2, 4 : "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." And the greater the display of divine goodness and mercy is, the greater is the obligation to repentance. And as in circumcision, so in baptism, is held forth and exhibited the greatest possible display of divine goodness, of mercies, and of blessings ; they must therefore, each of them, oblige to a disposition corresponding thereto. Therefore, it is said, Mark 1, 4 : "John did preach the baptism of repentance." That is, the baptism which conferred on the baptized an obligation to repentance.

5. Another important blessing, signified by circumcision, was the outpouring of the spirit of God. God says, Deut. 30, 6 : "I will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed." In a parallel passage he says, Isaiah 44, 3 : "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will *pour* my *spirit* on thy seed, and my blessing on thine offspring." Baptism signifies the same. Hence, spiritual baptism is so often spoken of, by the pouring out, shedding forth, shedding down, &c. of the holy spirit.



6. Another important blessing, signified by circumcision, was the remission of sins. *Christ* was a main article, made sure to Abraham, in the covenant. Gal. 3, 16 : "Now, to Abraham and to his seed, the promises were made. He saith not unto seeds, as of many, but as of one. And to thy seed, which is Christ." "And this I say, that the covenant which was confirmed of God in Christ : Christ, who should once put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself, was a main article in the covenant, and his benefits were signified by the seal." So baptism signifies the same benefits and blessings, Acts 2, 39 : "Be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins." 22, 16 : "Be baptized, and wash away thy sins." That is, receive that ordinance, which Christ hath instituted, as the sign or symbol of the remission of sins." Hence arises the obligation that every circumcised, and every baptized person is under to receive salvation at the hand of Christ.

7. One other important blessing, signified by circumcision, was sanctification, or the purifying effect of the operations of the spirit of God on a sinful soul. This was significantly and forcibly expressed and represented, by the various expressions of the circumcision of the heart, which directly pointed, not only to the beginning of a work of grace, in the heart, but to the carrying of it on, to the subduing of sin, to the removal of corrupt propensities ; and, whatever was inconsistent with that high and holy relation, into which God had graciously brought his people. In the language of the New-Testament, those who have received the seal, must put off the old man, which is corrupt with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness. Phil. 3, 3 : "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus." So, baptism signifies the same progress of holiness, or a work of grace in the heart. 1st Cor. 6, 11 : "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, (baptized,) ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." They had received the water baptism, which was a symbol of sanctification and justification. Eph. 5, 26 : "That he might sanctify and cleanse it, by the washing of water, by the word." That is, that he might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) all believers, by his holy spirit, signified by the washing, or the purifying of water, in the ordi-



nance of baptism. Hence also arises, and is signified by baptism, the correspondent *obligation* to be holy, to mortify and subdue sin, to walk in newness of life, and live in conformity to that *high and holy relation*, into which God has graciously brought us, by baptism. We have the same relation to God, as had the circumcised. As it is said, Hosea 1, 10: "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall it be said unto them, Ye are the Sons of the living God." This passage is quoted, Rom. 9, 36, and applied to the baptized Gentiles.

Again: Rom. 6, 2: "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us, as were baptized into Christ, are baptized into his death? buried with him by baptism into death?" That is, into a moral conformity to Christ, who died for us. "Knowing that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." The same thought, with little variation of expression, is found, Colos. 2, 10: "And ye are complete in him, (Christ,) in whom also ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God." The circumcision made without hands, is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter. He is a Jew who is one inwardly. But what is here worthy of special notice is, that this was signified to the Colossians, by their *baptism*, as if the apostle had said, Ye have no need of the literal circumcision; by your baptism, the same thing is signified. Ye are complete in him, (Christ.) He uses, what the former seal signified, to express to them what the latter signified. Each ordinance signified, or was the symbol of the same grace, viz: regeneration and sanctification, newness of life, and the putting off the body of sin."

Each ordinance, as far as we know, was in many respects, administered in a similar manner. Sometimes, it would seem, that in the ordinance of circumcision, there was but little formality. Credible writers of antiquity, however, tell us, that ordinarily, it was performed with great solemnity, and with forms and ceremonies deeply impressive, as the offering up

of devout and fervent prayers, giving of thanks, singing of psalms, imposing a *name*, and pronouncing a benediction on the circumcised child.—*Rees' Encyclopædia*. Luke 1, 59 : “When they came together to circumcise the child, they called his *name* Zacharias.” And from the words following, it is evident that the *name* must be called right, as it could not afterwards be altered. There was also a *coming* together of the people, a solemn meeting for that purpose. Again : Luke 2, 21 : “When eight days were accomplished, for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS. The calling of a person’s name, in administering the ordinance, seems to have been of divine appointment. I ask, then, with all due solemnity and candor, Does the ordinance of baptism signify, in the least degree, any thing more, in exhibiting blessings or conferring obligations, than the ordinance of circumcision did signify ? This question must certainly be answered in the negative. Nothing more in the scriptures do I find attributed to baptism, the latter seal, than to circumcision, the former seal. I ask then, again, Is it the *mode* of baptism, either pouring, sprinkling or plunging, which exhibits these benefits and blessings, and confers these obligations, or is it the *intent*, the *meaning*, the *nature*, and the *design*, of the ordinance which does it ? Any person of the least understanding, must at once see that the mode has nothing to do in the matter. The things essential to baptism are, that it is administered by a duly qualified officer in the church, to a proper subject, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the use of water ; but the quantity of the water has nothing to do in the case, nor the manner of applying it, whether by sprinkling, or pouring, or immersing. Circumcision being continued under the ministry of the apostles, and by the guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost, puts to silence all objections that can be raised against it, and proves, beyond a doubt, that it must be used with the same spiritual intent as before ; that is, as a token of God’s covenant and seal of the righteousness of faith. It had been of such long standing in the church, considered so sacred in its nature, and so interesting in its consequences, always known to the Jews as the ordinance which sealed their interest in the church and covenant of God ; that it was instituted immediately by God himself, sanctioned by all his teachers, without

which they were never allowed to claim any promise, nor be entitled to any religious privileges. Believing Jews themselves would have doubted the truth of that religion, which took it suddenly from them, and the divine wisdom did not see fit to do it.

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## SECTION XVII.

### JEWS AND GENTILES, WITH DIFFERENT SEALS, UNITED IN THE SAME CHURCHES.

Before the christian era, many Jews had migrated from Judea, into Greece and Italy, and in many places had built synagogues for public worship. It is said, Acts 11, 19: "Now they, which were scattered abroad, upon the persecution which arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to *none* but to Jews *only*." Very soon, however, the door of covenant mercies was opened to the Gentiles, and considerable numbers, both of Jews and Gentiles, became converts to the christian religion. Churches were planted, and both Jews and Gentiles, were received as members, especially at Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Antioch, and elsewhere. In the second, third and fourth chapters to the Romans, the apostle is very express, in describing the nature and intent of circumcision, and the benefit the Jews received from it; because, it was the visible sign and seal of their covenant standing, and gave them a title to the best means for their spiritual interest.—And, in the same chapters, he is equally explicit, with regard to believing Gentiles; that they had an equal standing, and enjoyed equal privileges and advantages, as the Jews. 3, 29: "Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision, by faith, and uncircumcision, through faith." Justification on both sides is predicated, not on the seals, but on condition of faith. Again, 4, 9: "Cometh this blessedness then, upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also?" 10, 12: "For there is no dif-



ference between the Jew and the Greek." The Jews who circumcised, and the Gentiles who baptized, stand both alike, and share equally in divine favours.

It has been before shewn, that believing Jews used the former, and the believing Gentiles the latter seal. But what is now proposed to be shewn is, that, with *these different* seals, both Jews and Gentiles were often united in the same churches, and had fellowship and communion together, in the same manner as if they had used but one and the same seal, and there was no objection or uneasiness about it, except what was made by false brethren, who repeatedly urged the baptized Gentiles to become circumcised.

That a part of this church, at Rome, were never baptized is as evident, as that a part were not circumcised. Chap. 6, 3: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death." This expression clearly implies, that a part of this church were never baptized. The apostle says, *so many of us*, including himself, who was the writer, with the church to which he wrote. He was not addressing himself to a mixed assembly of professors and non-professors, but to a church, all of whom were professed christians. And that some of them were Jews, and some Gentiles, must be evident to every one, who attentively reads this epistle. And, in writing to the Galatians, he uses a similar expression. In this church also, false brethren urged upon the Gentiles the necessity of circumcision, in order to be brought into the covenant made with Abraham, and enjoy regular membership in the church of Christ. And, to remove this difficulty, and quiet the minds of the members of this church, the apostle says, 3, 27, "For as many of *you* as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." "That is," says Mr. Henry, "they who, by baptism, are devoted to Christ, and do sincerely believe in him, are, to all intents and purposes, as much admitted into the christian state, as the Jews were by circumcision." Verse 29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs, according to the promise." This settles the question, and puts baptism upon the same footing with circumcision. The apostle says, "as many of you," of you members of the church, at Galatia, "as have been baptized." Compare these, with similar expressions, elsewhere. 2d Sam. 2, 23: "As ma-

ny as came to the place, where Asahel was slain, stood still." This certainly gives us to understand, that some of the host did not come to that place and stand still. John 1, 11 : "He (Christ) came unto his own, (the Jews) and his own received him not, but to *as many as* received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." This, again, certainly implies, that some of the Jews did not receive him. ¶ So when Paul preached to a congregation of Gentiles, Acts 13, 48, it is said, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." This, again, clearly supposes that some, to whom he preached, were *not* ordained to eternal life, and did not believe. This mode of expression is familiar, and cannot easily be misunderstood. The before cited expressions, then, one concerning the church at Rome, and the other concerning the church at Galatia, do as clearly imply, that some of the members of these churches had never been baptized, as that the expression, just quoted from John, 1, 11, implies, that some of the Jews did not receive Christ; or, as the one from Acts, 13, 48, implies, that some of the congregation, to whom Paul preached, were not ordained to eternal life, and did not believe. In his epistles to these churches, the apostle does not say, as many of the world as have been baptized; but, "so many of *us* as were baptised," and "*as many of you* as have been baptized," have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ as well as the circumcised.

Robert Hall, an open communion Baptist, and an able divine, in his treatise on open communion, speaking of the insufficiency of the Baptists' argument, to prove baptism to be a prerequisite for communion at the Lord's table, very candidly remarks, page 52, "When St. Paul says, as many of *you*, and so many of *us*, as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. His language seems to intimate, that there were a class of christians to whom this argument did not apply." Mr. Fuller, in his answer to Mr. Hall, does not reply to this understanding of these passages. Mr. Hall's idea was, as we shall soon see from further quotations, that a class of christians in the primitive church were received, not by baptism, but by circumcision.

The church at Corinth also, as well as most others in that region of the country, consisted of both Jews and Gentiles. In writing to this church, the apostle settles this controversy,

in the most explicit manner, not only for them, but for all churches everywhere. 1st Cor. 7, 17, 18 : "As the Lord hath called every man, so let him walk, and so ordain I in all churches. Is any man called, being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? Let him not become circumcised." Here was the same dispute, whether baptism alone was sufficient. And it could not have been 'settled in words plainer than these. Whatever reason there was, at the first preaching of the gospel, to baptise some who had been circumcised, that reason did not long continue. At this time, the Jew converted to christianity, having, in his infancy, received circumcision, might not be suffered to renounce it, consider it a nullity, and receive baptism. Neither, might the believing Gentile be circumcised. This was now made a standing *order* or *decree*, not for this church alone, but for all churches. "So *ordain* I in *all* churches." This decree of the apostle is in perfect conformity to the decree of the council, Acts 15, 28 ; 16, 4, which we have noticed before. It has no reference to doctrine, but to practice alone, and is so plain as not to be misunderstood, either then or now. Here then is positive evidence, that *circumcision*, and circumcision alone, without baptism, was used in the churches as a seal of the covenant, and for no other end. The Jew, who was converted at an adult age, was by this decree, positively forbidden to renounce his circumcision, which he had received in his infancy, and was also forbidden to be baptized.

Now, the apostle neither condemns the one, nor the other seal, nor justifies the one, more than the other ; but calls their attention to the spiritual meaning and intent of both. Verse 19 : "Circumcision is nothing but the keeping of the commandments of God." Gal. 5, 6 : "In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." 6, 15 : "But a new creature." Col. 3, 11 : "But Christ is all in all." In these expressions, the apostle does not overlook the external seals, they are both alike good. They signify the same things. They verily profit, "if thou keep the law." Rom. 2, 25. That is, if thou live according to the great end of their appointment, feel their spiritual influence, conform to the covenant obligation, to which you seal your engagement, have faith in



Christ, obedience, and love to God, art holy in heart, and in life, according to what is signified and intended by these seals, then, whether you use the one, or the other, you have nothing to fear ; but without this conformity, and devotedness to God, they will not avail you any thing, but will become a nullity.

Again : 1st Cor. 12, 5 : "There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." The most distinguishing difference was, in the administration of these different seals, and probably the apostle had reference to this wholly. And what if there was a difference externally ? There was the same Lord—the same covenant privileges—the same grace exhibited—the same grace enjoyed—the same glory promised. And, because circumcision was administered to some, and baptism to others, that was no cause why there should be a breach of fellowship. Indeed it does not appear, that the dispute was ever carried so far as to break, or materially interrupt their communion. Jews and Gentiles had the same Lord—the same altar—the same standing in the church. This was the foundation of their communion. They all partook of the same common blessings, and the same spiritual grace. In the same chapter, verse 13, he says again : "By one *spirit* we are all baptized into *one body*, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*." Here, we observe, he most emphatically says, *all, yes, all*. He does not now say as many as, but he says *all*. Spiritual baptism, that is, the operation of the spirit of God upon the heart, the thing signified by each of the external seals, was the same to all. To Jews and Gentiles the same, perfectly the same.

We will now close this section with a few quotations, from eminent divines, shewing their opinion on this subject.

Mr. Hall, the open communion Baptist writer, whom we have noticed before, was certainly a man of clear and discriminating judgment and discernment. One paragraph, from his book, which we quoted a short time ago, we here repeat, and also add a few others.

Page 57 : "It is natural to enquire who baptized the apostles, and the hundred and twenty disciples assembled with them, at the day of Pentecost ? My deliberate opinion is, that, in the christian sense of the term, they were not baptized at all."

Page 67 : "It (baptism) was not extended to such as were

converted previous to the Lord's resurrection." Page 74 : "The sacrament, (Lord's Supper,) at first, was administered to persons who had not received baptism." He supposes they were received as members of the Jewish church, by circumcision, and not by baptism ; because, he does not consider John's baptism to be a christian baptism, and there is no evidence of their having received that. Page 108 : "Among the Jewish converts, very different sentiments were entertained on the subject of circumcision, which *all* appear to have observed." He thinks the Jewish converts all observed circumcision with different sentiments, and higher views of it, than what they had of baptism. This is not denied by Fuller, his antagonist and strenuous opponent.

Dr. Lathrop : "It is an undeniable fact, that circumcised believers were, frequently, if not generally, received to fellowship, in the christian church, without baptism ; for all churches have fellowship with the church at Jerusalem, and Jewish and Gentile believers have communion in the same churches. That Christ's first disciples were baptized, we have no evidence. That the *twelve* partook of the first supper, before christian baptism was so much as instituted, is undeniable ; for it is evident from Acts 19, 5, that John's baptism was not christian baptism."

Dr. West : "These believing Jews were united in the same churches, with believing Gentiles who had received the christian baptism, though they were uncircumcised. Neither the circumcision of the Jews, nor the uncircumcision of the Gentiles, was made a term of christian communion and fellowship, on either side." "The believing Jew, who was circumcised, united with the believing Gentile, who was uncircumcised. It was known, and conceded on both hands, that circumcision was not required, as it never had been of the Gentiles, and was not, as yet abolished, as to the Jews, of whom it had been required, even from the days of Abraham."

Again : "The zeal which these christian Jews had for infant circumcision, shews that they considered the administration of the seal of this gracious covenant, to be a duty, or a privilege, or both, and of indispensable importance. Possessed of these views, and justified in them by the *Holy Ghost*, it is hardly conceivable that they should unite in the same churches with Gentiles, who wholly neglected to apply the

appointed seal of their relation, to the same gracious covenant and title to the promises and blessings of it, to their infant seed." This reasoning is not only conclusive, but its force is irresistible. It is wholly beyond conception, that Jews, so fond of applying the covenant seal to their children, could have been induced to unite with Gentiles, who did not do the same for their children. The just and unavoidable conclusion is, that the Gentiles, with unfailling punctuality, gave up their children to God by baptism, which was intended of the Holy Ghost, to succeed the former seal, and which had the same spiritual intent and signification.

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## SECTION XVIII.

### HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

Suffice it to say, that our opponents do freely acknowledge, that the practice of infant baptism prevailed in the church as early as the close of the second, or the beginning of the third century ; but do not pretend to bring any evidence, from the history of the church, shewing the period when it first began, nor do they offer any satisfactory reasons, why it did universally prevail, as early as they themselves admit that it did. Nor do they shew any evidence that any church, or even individual christians, ever objected to the *validity*, or the *lawfulness* of infant baptism.

On this subject, we are very much indebted to the ingenious and learned Dr. Wall, whose critical researches into ancient ecclesiastical history, and candid relation of facts, have been such as render him good authority. This our opponents do not deny. We shall, therefore, make statements, either in his own language, or in conformity to the relations he has given. Concerning infant baptism, these are his words : " For the first four hundred years, there appears only one man, Tertullian, that advised the delay of infant baptism, in some cases ; and one Gregory, that did practise such delay, in case of his children : But no society, so thinking, or so practising, nor any other man, saying that it was unlaw-



ful to baptize infants. In the next seven hundred years, there is not so much as one man to be found, that either spoke for, or practised such delay, but all to the contrary. And when about the year 1180, one sect, among the Waldenses, declared against the baptizing of infants, as being incapable of salvation, the main body of that people rejected their opinion; and they of them that held that opinion, quickly dwindled away and disappeared; there being no more heard of, holding that opinion, till the rising of the German Anti-pedo Baptists, in the year 1522."

Our opponents, in attempting to establish dipping, as the mode of baptism, have quoted from Dr. Wall, the following sentence: "All christians in the world, who never owned the Pope's authority, do now, and ever did, dip their infants in the ordinary use." But this proves the practice of baptizing infants, and that they did not universally dip them, only ordinarily, of course they considered it both lawful and proper to sprinkle them when weak or sickly.

*Justin Martyr*, who wrote about forty years after the apostolic age, says; "We have not received the carnal, but the spiritual circumcision, by baptism, and it is enjoined to all persons in the same way." From his calling baptism the spiritual circumcision, it is evident that he considers it as coming in the place of circumcision, and to be administered to the same subjects. In one of his apologies for the christians, he says: "Several persons among us, of sixty or seventy years old, *paidon ematketeuthesan*, to *kristo*, who from infants, were made disciples to Christ, do continue uncorrupt." He here uses the same word, which is used in the commission to baptize, and if they were made disciples proselyted, or devoted to Christ from their infancy, they were unquestionably baptized.

*Ireneus*, who wrote in less than seventy years after the apostles, was born before the death of St. John, and was acquainted with Polycarp, who was John's disciple, speaking of Christ, says: "He came to save all persons by himself; who, by him, are regenerated (that is, born of the water) unto God, infants, little ones, youths and elderly persons." It is evident, that he means baptized, born, or regenerated of the water, from his own words, where he says: "When Christ gave the command of regenerating unto God, he said, Go

and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. Much stress, it seems, was laid by the ancient Fathers, on the words of our Lord, John 3, 5: "Except a man (*tis* any one) be born of the water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The original word signifies either to be born, or to be begotten, or regenerated of the water, and of the spirit. Now, there has been but one sentiment, as to being born, or regenerated of the water. All suppose it means baptism, and the question is, Whether baptism is necessary to salvation? The import of the words, if taken in their plain and literal meaning, certainly convey this idea; that is, under ordinary circumstances, when baptism may be had. Or, they may be understood elliptically, thus: "Except any one be born, *not only* of the water, but of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." This would vary the sense a little, but would still convey the idea that much stress was laid; and, intended by the Saviour, to be laid on the institution of baptism. The ancient Fathers interpreted the text as conveying the idea of the necessity of both; that is, of regeneration of the water, and of the spirit, in order to salvation. Therefore, they often call baptism, regeneration of the water—the sacrament of salvation, &c. And, doubtless, lightly to esteem, or wilfully to neglect baptism, is highly offensive to Christ, the institutor of it.

*Tertullian*, who flourished about one hundred years after the apostles, is the one before mentioned, who advised the delay of infant baptism. These are his words: "According to every person's *condition* and *disposition*, and even their *age*, the delay of baptism is *more useful*; but, especially, with regard to little children. For, what necessity is there, that the sponsors also should be brought into danger? Because, either by death, they may break their promises, or else may be deceived by a future wicked disposition. Why does this innocent age make haste to the remission of sins, (that is, to baptism?) For no less reason, unmarried persons also should be delayed, until they either marry, or be confirmed in continence."

As we shall have occasion hereafter to notice this writer again, we will now only remark, that his advising the delay of infant baptism, is good evidence that it was then in practice, or else he could not have advised the delay of it. Neither



does he pretend that it was a novel institution, or unlawful, or invalid. Neither is it the *age* of children to which he objects, because he advises the delay of baptism, as much in the case of unmarried persons, as in the case of children. His arguments are futile, founded, not on reason or scripture, but on superstition, and were followed only by one single person.

*Origen*, who was cotemporary with *Tertullian*, has various passages that tend to illustrate and confirm the antiquity of infant baptism. The following are some of them : "What is the reason, why the baptism of the church, conferred for the remission of sins, is also administered to infants ? Since, were there nothing in infants that required forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism might seem superfluous."—Again : "Infants are baptized for the remission of sins. Of what sins ? Or, when have they sinned ? Or, how in the case of little children, can any reason of the laver (i. e. baptism) hold good, except according to the sense above mentioned ? No one is free from pollution, though his life upon the earth were but the length of one day. And because, by the sacrament of baptism, our native pollutions are done away ; therefore it is, that infants are baptized. For, except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven." And again : "The church hath received the tradition from the apostles, that baptism ought to be administered to infants. For they, to whom the divine mysteries were committed, knew that there were in all, those natural defilements, which must be washed away by water, and the spirit." He argues the doctrine of original sin, from the fact of infant baptism ; which argument could have had but little force, except, as he says, it had been the constant usage of the church to baptize children.

*Cyprian*, who wrote about one hundred and fifty years after the apostles, gives an account of sixty-six bishops assembled in council at Carthage, when a country bishop, whose name was *Fidus*, sent this question, which he desired should be laid before that council, and their answer obtained :—"Ought not baptism to be administered to infants, on the eighth day, according to the law of circumcision ?" The council were unanimous, that the day was not material, and wrote a letter to that effect, directed to the country bishop, and signed by *Cyprian* himself, in behalf of the council. Some



of this council, without doubt, must have been aged men, who could remember within a short time of the apostolic age. Some, who must have been acquainted with the immediate successors of the apostles ; and if infant baptism had been a practice, introduced since the apostles, some or all of them must have known it ; and, if so, they would have intimated some scruples about it. They all agree that infants should be *baptized*. Their *baptism* was not a question, only the *day* on which it should be administered ; and without the least hesitation, they all agree that the *day* was not essential.

A little more than one hundred years later, *Gregory Nazianzen* taught "that infants should be baptized, to consecrate them to Christ, in their infancy." *Ambrose*, "that the baptism of infants had been the practice of the apostles and of the church, till that time." *Crysostom*, "that baptism had no determinate time, as circumcision had ; but one in the beginning of life, or one in the middle of it, or one in old age, might receive it."

One other case affords the most decided testimony. It is the controversy between St. Austin and Pelagius, on the subject of original sin. This was about three hundred years after the apostles. Pelagius denied the doctrine of original sin. St. Austin defended it, and in proof of it, together with other arguments, he urges infant baptism, and demands, "Why are infants baptized for the remission of sins, if they have none?" Pelagius was a man of extensive acquaintance with the world ; and, had infant baptism been introduced, since the apostles, he must have known it ; and the circumstances in which he was then placed, demanded that he should shew it, if it had been the fact. He does not pretend that it was an innovation, or any thing less than a divine institution. And when it was urged upon him, that the denial of original sin was in effect the same as a denial of the ordinance of infant baptism, he denies the consequence, and complains "that he had been slanderously represented, as denying baptism to infants," and says : "Who can be so impious, as to hinder infants from being baptized, and born again in Christ?" And, after citing the words "Except a man (*tis* any one) be born of the water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," he demands, "Who can be so impious, as to refuse to an infant, of whatever age, the com-

mon redemption of mankind ?” Again : St. Austin himself does not hesitate to say, “ That he did not remember ever to have read of any, not only in the Catholic church, but even in any heresy or schism whatsoever, who maintained that baptism ought to be denied to infants. This the church has *always* possessed, has *always* maintained.”

From this time to the year 1522, as Dr. Wall, upon a most full and thorough investigation of the subject, assures us there is not so much as *a man* to be found, among all the numerous sects of christians, who has spoken against, or pleaded for the delay of the baptism of infants, except the small sect before mentioned, which arose in the twelfth century, who denied the possibility of the salvation of infants, and accordingly their right to baptism ; and, as we then observed, this sect very soon became extinct.

Some American baptists have pretended, that the Waldenses, a people living in the vallies of Picdmont, and who never submitted to the authority of the Pope, were baptists. We are happy to have unquestionable evidence to the contrary. The substance of a letter, giving an account of this people, was published by the Editor of the Western Recorder, a religious paper printed at Utica, N. Y. March 12, 1825, and is as follows :—

“ WALDENSES.—A letter was read, (at a monthly concert) from the Rev. Sereno E. Dwight, dated at Rome, in which he gives some account of this interesting people. The only people that preserved uncorrupted, the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, through the darkness of the middle ages. They inhabit three deep vallies, quite at the northern part of Italy, and open only to the South. Population nearly 20,000, and chiefly residents in thirteen villages. They are a very plain, industrious and pious people, bearing, as Mr. Dwight imagines, a very strong resemblance, in their character and manners, to the fathers of New-England. In consequence of their religion, they are subject to many and great privations ; can neither be physicians nor lawyers ; are obliged to pay enormous taxes, and suffer other various hardships. Yet, for all this, apostacies to the Catholic religion are almost unknown. Mr. Dwight having letters of introduction to Rev. Mr. Bert, a godly minister among them, was received with the greatest cordiality. He attended a little meeting, in com-



pany with Mr. Bert, and was highly pleased with the plainness, sincerity, and solemnity, which seemed to prevail. Although, in a manner shut out from the world, Mr. Bert has a library of seven or eight hundred volumes, and is a man of general intelligence, as well as of undoubted piety. In answer to an enquiry of his guest, Mr. Bert remarked, that the Waldenses had always baptized their *infants*, and had always done it by affusion."

We will now just take notice of the defence, which our brethren set up, in opposition to what has been exhibited from the history of the church. Mr. Pengilly, is a Baptist writer, of considerable eminence. From his book, (Boston edition,) we make the following extracts, page 36 :—

"Tertullian has no where mentioned pedo-baptism among the traditions or customs of the church, that were publicly received and usually observed. For in his book "*De Baptismo*," supposed to be written, A. D. 204, he dissuades from baptizing infants, and proves the delay of it, to a more mature age, to be preferred. Nothing can be affirmed with certainty, concerning the custom of the church before Tertullian, seeing there is not any where, in more ancient writers that I know of, undoubted mention of infant baptism."

Again : "The passage alluded to, as containing the first mention of infant baptism, is the following : TERTULLIAN—The delay of infant baptism may be more advantageous, on account of the condition, disposition, or age of any person, especially in reference to little children. For what necessity is there, that the sponsors should be brought into danger? Because, either they themselves may fail of their promises by death, or be deceived by evil disposition," [in the children.]

Mr. P. is probably correct enough, as to the time when Tertullian wrote, A. D. 204 ; from whence, deducting the life of Christ, and the time which St. John lived after the death of Christ, would make about one hundred years after the death of St. John. Tertullian, therefore, must have been well acquainted with the history of the church, from the apostles down to that time. The relations of old men, received when they were young, from other men who were then old, must have been pretty good testimony to support the facts



or usages and customs, as far back as when the apostles themselves lived and flourished.

Now, the very attempt of Tertullian, to dissuade from the *practice* of infant baptism, must be taken as decided evidence that it was at that time in practice, otherwise he could not dissuade from it. And Mr. P. says : “ Nothing can be affirmed, with certainty, concerning infant baptism, before Tertullian ; then most clearly nothing can be affirmed against its having been the universal practice of the church, from the apostles down to that time.”

One thing is here very evident, viz : If the practice of infant baptism had commenced later than the apostles, Tertullian could have shewn it, which he does not attempt to do. Mr. P. says, Tertullian proves the delay of it to be preferred. And how does he prove it ? By any authority from the bible ? No. By shewing that it was unapostolical, illegal, or invalid ? Not at all. Does he offer in support of his opinion any order or decree of council ? By no means. If he could have shewn any of these, it would have been to his purpose. But as he does not shew any of these, the presumption is, that he could not shew them. He gives only his own opinion, and this is as strong against *unmarried* persons, as against infants. And of so little weight and influence was his advice, that as Dr. Wall shows, but only one man was persuaded to embrace it.

We will notice only one more Baptist writer, viz : Mr. Robinson, from whose octavo volume we make the following extracts :—

Page 291 : “ When adult baptism fell into disuse.”

“ 294 : “ The disuse of adult baptism.”

“ 296 : “ The loss of the baptism of adults.”

He quotes no writer, but makes these expressions, upon his own authority. He does not state the time when all this happened. One would suppose, from reading him, that it was sometime in the third century, after the time of Tertullian, that the baptism of adults was discontinued, and infant baptism became the universal practice. Then, he gravely tells us, page 309, “ Baptism rose pure in the east ; it rolled westward, diminished in lustre, often beclouded with mists, and sometimes under a total eclipse, at length it escaped the

eye, and was lost among attenuated particles, shades, *non entities*, and *monsters*." No better account do they give of the ordinance of baptism, from the early ages of the church, down to the time when their sect arose, which was about three hundred years ago.

At this time, when they say baptism was lost, or, in other words, infant baptism universally prevailed, Christianity was extended, not only over Palestine, but in Italy, Greece, Assyria, and Asia Minor. Let us, then, for once suppose, as Baptists do, that the apostles, and the whole christian church, decidedly refused to baptize infants, and baptized only adults, could it be possible that such a change could be made in one hundred years, from the ministry of the apostles, that the baptism of adults should be entirely omitted, and the baptism of infants become the universal practice? And, more strange and unaccountable still, no one is found, who said the practice was *unapostolical*, *illegal*, or *invalid*!!! Even Tertulian, though a bold innovator, chimerical, fanciful and visionary, does not pretend to any such thing. If the whole christian church were now baptists, in sentiment and in feeling, as our baptist brethren are, and an attempt was made to alter the practice, from baptizing adult professors only, and baptize the infants of all believers, could such a change be made, over the whole church, in one hundred years, that infant baptism should become, not only the prevailing, but the universal practice, would not *ten thousand* mouths be open, and ten thousand voices be raised, to vindicate the former practice, and strenuously oppose, and firmly resist such an innovation?

Again: If, as Mr. R. asserts, baptism was lost, and as our brethren do believe, who had a right, without a new commission from Heaven, to institute and commence it again? Baptists say, that a minister, who was himself baptized in his infancy, has no right to administer ordinances, nor to come to the Lord's table, because he is still an unbaptized person. If he baptize even an adult believer, and in their mode, it is not baptism, because the administrator was an unbaptized person. Whatever baptism, he administers, is invalid.

Again: Our brethren say, that infant baptism is no baptism, and such churches as baptize infants, are no churches; that they do not even belong to the visible kingdom of Christ.



Then, as they admit, that in about one hundred years from the apostles, infant baptism was universal, and say that adult baptism went into disuse, and baptism itself was lost, it unquestionably follows, of course, even upon their own plan, that from the beginning of the *third*, till near the close of the *sixteenth* century, there was a period of at least *thirteen hundred years*, when Christ had no visible church in the world!!! Such are the difficulties in which, according to their own scheme, and according to their own admissions, they are involved. Insuperable difficulties closely beset them at every corner. The fair, candid, and indeed the unavoidable conclusion is, that they are greatly in error, and that infant baptism, according to scripture testimony, and God's dealings with parents and children, under all former dispensations of his gracious covenant, did commence with the first age of the christian church, and with unbroken succession has been continued down to the present time, and will continue to the end of the world.

We will now subjoin a few quotations from the baptist historian, David Benedict. He attempts to ridicule the idea of any lineal succession. Vol. 1, page 132, calls it a 'zig-zag,' and quotes from Mr. Robinson, as follows: "The doctrine of uninterrupted succession is necessary only to such churches as regulate their faith and practice by tradition, and for their use it was first invented." He goes on to remark: "But a baptist has not the least trouble about what is called a lineal or apostolical succession. His line of succession is in faithful men, and it is a matter of indifference with them, where or when they lived; by what name they were called, or by whom they were baptized or ordained. But one thing is certain, that if any thing has been omitted, or done wrong, they are sure to correct it, according to their views of the apostolic model."

Page 473: "The first church in Providence. This church, which is the oldest of the Baptist denomination in America, was planted in the year 1639. Its first members were twelve in number, viz: Roger Williams, Ezekiel Holliman, William Arnold, William Harris, Stuckly Westcot, John Green, Richard Waterman, Thomas James, Robert Cole, William Carpenter, Francis Weston, and Thomas Olney."

475: "They were convinced of the nature and design of



believer's baptism, by immersion, but from a variety of circumstances, had been prevented from submission. To obtain a suitable administrator, was a matter of consequence. At length, the candidates for communion, nominated and appointed Mr. Ezekiel Holliman to baptize Mr. Williams, and who, in return, baptized Mr. Holliman and the other ten."

Finally : With regard to the history of infant baptism, there can not be a reasonable *doubt* but it was continued, without interruption, in the church, from the days of the apostles down, and has been continued down to the present time. And, concerning the Baptists, we have stated facts from their own writers, but we make no comment upon them. Every one must make his own, as he shall think proper.

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## SECTION XIX.

### MODE OF BAPTISM,—ARGUMENTS, FOR IMMERSION, INSUFFICIENT.

It would seem as if the *mode* of baptism, which is nothing essential, but merely circumstantial, was not of sufficient importance to cause trouble in the church of Christ. Yet, if we read the whole history of the church, from its commencement to the present day, we shall scarcely find any subject, great or small, which has done so much to kindle strife, to create hardness, jealousies and evil surmisings ; so much to destroy communion, and impede the progress of piety, as the one now before us. And why is all this ? Not from the thing itself, but from the ruinous consequences which have arisen from misconceived opinions, and an over-heated zeal for that which is external, rather than internal, circumstantial, than essential. A candid examination of the subject is, therefore, at the present day, of no small moment.

Our brethren say, that nothing short of immersing the whole body under water, even to the utmost extremities, is baptism. And all who have not been thus totally immersed, are unbaptized, and do not belong to the visible church.—Thus, they feign to unchurch the church of God, among all

denominations, save their own.—Many of our brethren, depend much on the prepositions *in*, *into*, from and out of the water, translated from the Greek *en*, *eis*, *apo* and *ek*. When the fact is, they are used in so many various senses, that no dependence can be placed on them as proof or evidence.—Schrivierius, (who is probably the best authority we can have,) says, *en*, especially in the sacred writings of the Hebrews, has the power of all prepositions. We will mention a few instances. Mat. 3, 5 : “ There went out unto him (John) Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him *en* in Jordan.” Mark 1, 5 : “ *In* the river of Jordan.” We read again, Joshua 3, 8, that when the priests who bare the ark came to the brink of the water of Jordan, they were commanded to stand still *en* in Jordan. Here is the same word and the same river. Again, we read, Mat. 3, 11, where John says : “ I indeed baptize you *en* with water. But he shall baptize you *en* with the Holy Ghost.” Baptizing *with* the Holy Ghost, we know cannot mean immersion in the Holy Ghost. And, Mark 4, 1 : “ And he (Jesus) entered into a ship and sat *en* in the sea.” Not under water, but on the sea. If, then, the priests who bare the ark, Joshua, 3, 11, might be said to stand *in Jordan*, when they only stood at the edge of the water, those whom John baptized, might be said to be baptized *in Jordan*, when they were only at the edge of the water. The original word certainly proves no more in the one case than in the other. And Jesus, Mark 4, 1, sat only on the water, not under the water. Again, Acts 3, 39 : “ And they (Philip and the Eunuch) went down both *eis* into the water, and he baptized him. And they came up *ek* out of the water.” And we read again, Mat. 17, 27, Christ said to Peter, Go thou *eis* to the sea, and cast in an hook. The same word, but it does not mean that he should go any farther than to the sea.—Again, Luke 11, 13, we read that the Queen of the South came *ek* from the uttermost parts of the earth, the same word ; but it does not mean that she came from beneath the surface of the earth, neither does the other that Philip and the Eunuch came from beneath the surface of the water. They went down together, and both came up together. They probably stepped into the edge of the water. As we see from these instances, and if it were necessary a vast many more might



be shewn, that these prepositions are used in so indefinite a manner, that they afford no proof of immersion.

Again : They say that the original words *bapto*, *baptizo*, and its correspondent noun *baptismos*, signify immersion ; that they are never used for washing the hands, nor for sprinkling, nor for dipping a part of the body, but only for the immersion of the whole body under water.

It may be proper here to remark, that the words before mentioned, are in the New-Testament sometimes translated wash, and sometimes baptize. They are used, especially *baptizo*, for the christian ordinance, for ceremonial, and for traditional purification. When the christian ordinance is meant, or when John's purification is meant, or that which the disciples of Christ used, or other purifications of divine appointment, the translators have commonly used the word baptize ; and when traditional purification is meant, they have commonly used either wash or purify. But the meaning, as far as the action is concerned, is undoubtedly always the same. Elder Merrill says, page 20 : " Baptism signifies to dip, immerse, or wash the body all over. To baptize, signifies to plunge under water, to dip or wash the body all over. To be baptized, signifies to be plunged, immersed, or washed all over." Page 29 : " The plain, literal, and common signification of the word is, to immerse, overwhelm, dip, or plunge all over." " There appears to be no evidence that it is ever so much as once used in any part of the bible, to signify the application of water in any other sense." Page 45 : " I do not find that *baptizo*, is used in any place, for washing hands, or for washing or dipping a part of the body, or any other thing." Page 53 : " *Baptizo* signifies to dip, wash the body all over." Page 54 : " The merit of the *whole subject* depends greatly, if not entirely, upon the determinate meaning of the words which our Lord used in the institution of the ordinance, and when speaking of it."

Supposing, then, that in their common acceptance, the words before-mentioned did signify as much as our brethren contend that they do, would it be necessary, or even proper in the christian ordinance, to go to their full extent and meaning, in their common acceptance ? Common sense would certainly say no, it is not. Now, the word supper, which is used for the ordinance of commemorating the death of Christ,



does signify a full meal, a feast, the largest meal we at any time eat ; but in the religious use of that word, we do not carry it to that extent. In the ordinance of commemorating the death of Christ, we think a small portion of bread and wine sufficient, and that a full meal would be highly improper. And is there not a propriety to be observed in the ordinance of baptism ? If the word, in its common acceptation, did signify a total immersion of the whole body, joint and limb throughout, would it not be unnecessary and improper, in the religious use of the word, to carry the meaning to that extent ? Would it not be as improper as to eat a full meal in commemorating the death of Christ ? But, we contend, that while the word supper does signify a full meal, the word baptism does not signify a total immersion of the whole body under water. It is often used for a slight and partial washing, or application of water, and sometimes for sprinkling. Oftener, indeed, in this way, than in any other. And the only way to come to a correct understanding of the determinate meaning of these words, is to compare scripture with scripture. The use of them, in various passages of scripture, must give us their true and determinate meaning.

Let us, then, consider the word *bapto*. If this word sometimes signifies immersion, it is certain that it does not always so signify—consequently, *baptizo*, which is derived from it, does not, especially when applied to the christian ordinance, necessarily signify more than sprinkling. A few cases, of the use of each of these words, will satisfy the minds of all candid enquirers on the subject. Joshua 3, 15 : “ And the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water.” In the Septuagint, *abaphesan*, from *bapto*. This was not plunging the whole body under water, nor even the feet, because it is said, verse 13, that only the soles of their feet were to rest in Jordan. It was only a small touch of the water, to the soles of their feet. Again, 2d Kings, 5, 14 : “ Then went he down and dipped, *ebaptisato*, seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God.” This might be plunging ; but if the prophet had any reference to the law of the leper, as probably he had, then it was sprinkling, because that law, Levit. 14, 7, required sprinkling seven times. The number of times in both cases is the same, and probably the action was the same. Job 9, 31 : “ Yet shalt

thou, *ebaphesas*, plunge me in the ditch." This might be plunging pretty deep, but one would hardly think so deep as our brethren plunge in baptism. Daniel 4, 33 : "His body, *ebaphe*, was wet with the dew of Heaven." This certainly was not plunging in any sense. It has not even the remotest allusion to plunging. We know how the dew falls. It was sprinkled upon him, and in the most gentle manner too. Mark 14, 20 : "One of the twelve, *embaptomenos*, that dip-peth with me in the dish." This was not plunging the whole body.

One other instance, of the use of this word, is in Homer's ludicrous mock Poem, describing a battle between the mice and the frogs, by the side of a lake. One of the latter, on the bank of the lake, was wounded by one of the former ; and, falling backwards into the lake, he instantly expires. And, *ebapteto de aimati limne*. The lake was baptized with his blood. Mr. Parnell, the English poet, corrected by Mr. Pope, renders the passage thus :—

"Gasping, he rolls a purple stream of blood,

"Distains the surface of the silver flood."

The lake was not dipped in the blood of the frog, but was tinged, stained, or sprinkled, if you please, with the blood of the frog. Dipping, or plunging, is absolutely excluded from the meaning of the term, in this, as well as in several of the before-mentioned instances. If, then, this term *bapto*, is ever used for dipping, it is not unfrequently used for a slight and partial wetting, and for sprinkling.

We will now consider the word *baptizo*, which is a derivative from *bapto*. We will also consider the word *baptismos*, the noun corresponding with the verb *baptizo* ; and the only source of correct information, in this case, is the bible. The use of these words, in various passages of scripture, must give the determinate scripture meaning of them. Our brethren say, as we have quoted from Elder Merrill, one of their favorite authors, and now repeat : "They are never used for any thing short of dipping, or plunging the whole body under water ; never used for washing hands, nor for dipping a part of the body, or any other thing." Now, this is a great mistake ; hopefully, however, not a wilful one. Luke 11, 38. When our Saviour sat down to meat with a Pharisee, the



Pharisee marvelled that he had not first *ebaptisthe* washed, or literally been baptized. The Saviour replies: "Now, do ye Pharisees, make clean the *outside* of the cup and the platter," &c. Hence, it is evident, that in the washings of their cups and platters, brazen vessels and tables, they applied the purifying element only to the outside of them. They were not immersed in it. Again: It is evident, that what the Pharisees required of persons as a purification before eating, was not the immersion of their whole bodies, but the washing of their hands. This we learn from sundry passages of scripture. Mat. 15, 2: The Pharisees demanded of Christ, saying, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the Elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread." Jesus replied, verse 20: "To eat bread with unwashen hands defileth not a man." Mark 7, 1: "Then came together unto him the Pharisees." Verse 2: "And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread, with unwashen hands, they found fault." Verse 3: "For the Pharisees, except they wash their hands *oft*, eat not." Verse 4: "And when they come from the market, except *me baptisontai* they wash, they eat not." Verse 5: "Then the Pharisees asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the Elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?" It is then evident, that all which the Pharisee expected of the Saviour, in the case before-mentioned, Luke 11, 38, was that he should comply with their custom of washing his hands before he sat down to meat. Here, then, are two instances at least, where the word *baptize* is used for the washing of hands. And whether this was done by dipping them in the water, or by having water poured upon them as Elisha, 1st Kings, 3, 11, poured water on the hands of Elijah, is uncertain. At any rate, these instances are contrary to all ideas that the word does and must always signify a total immersion of the whole body under water—Elder Merrill, and all our baptist brethren, to the contrary notwithstanding. And the noun *baptismos*, corresponding with the verb *baptizo*, is used for the external application of the purifying element, for making clean the outside of the cup and the platter.

Again: 1st Cor. 10, 1: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye (Gentiles) should be ignorant how that all our (Jewish) fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the



sea, and were all, *ebaptisanto*, baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Mr. Henry, in his commentary on this place, says : "They had sacraments like ours. They were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea, or into Moses ; that is, they were brought under obligation to Moses' law and covenant. It was to them a typical baptism." They were all baptized, visibly, *eis ton Mosen*, into Moses, but in reality into Christ, of whom Moses was a type, and in whose house he was a faithful servant. So when the apostle speaks of being baptized into Christ, Rom. 6, 3, he uses the same word which we translate into Christ. This baptism, therefore, seems to be a real sacrament ; and the apostle tells us, verse 6, was for our example : and also, Heb. 11, 29, was done by faith in Christ. But what was the mode ? Sprinkling or plunging ? Not plunging truly. They went through on dry ground and dry shod. The Psalmist, speaking of this very case, says, Psalm 77, 16 : "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee. They were afraid, the depths also were troubled ; the *cloud* poured out water."

To evade the instruction from this case, so clear, so plain, and so forcible, our brethren say, the cloud which contained water was above them, and the waters of the sea were on either side of them, and of course it was a figure of baptism by immersion. But how weak and how pitiful is this relief !! There was no water under them, because it is expressly said they went through on dry ground ; and certainly there was none before them, nor behind them. It was not, as Elder Merrill and all our brethren say, plunging the whole body under water. Let them make the most of it they can ; according to their explanation of it, it was but a dry baptism. The Egyptians truly were plunged, but the children of Israel were as truly sprinkled. Neither does the apostle say they were baptized in a figure, nor give the least intimation of any such thing ; but he says, affirmatively and positively, they were all *baptized* unto Moses, who was God's minister, and a mediator between God and his people.

One thing further, as if the apostle had foreseen the evasion, and was careful to prevent our being deceived by it, changes the preposition *upo*, which he uses in the first member of the sentence, to *en* in the next ; which, if he meant to convey any idea of immersion, it is natural to suppose he would have

retained. For, says he, they were all, *upo*, under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses, *not, upo*, under the cloud, but, *en*, by, or with the cloud, and, *en*, with the sea. They were sprinkled with water from the cloud, and with some of the mist or spray from the sea. They were all baptized, sprinkled, but not plunged.

Again, Heb. 9, 10 : Divers washings, *diaphorais baptismois*, diverse baptisms. The apostle is speaking of the Jewish ritual ; that it stood in meats and drinks, and diverse baptisms. This word is certainly used in so extensive a sense, as to include all the different kinds of purifications under the former dispensation, whether by bathing or by sprinkling ; and, that the apostle had a special reference to sprinkling, is evident from the connection. We know that most of their purifications were by sprinkling : some were by bathing, but that does not necessarily mean plunging. Some were by rinsing, but those might be by pouring on. Baptist writers have passed over this text with as little notice as possible. Some of them have attempted to evade its force, simply by saying "*divers*," because different persons and things were purified ; the *mode* being always the same. But it is evident from the use of the word in other instances, that it means *diverse*, or baptisms of different kinds, or kinds differing one from another. The only place in the New Testament where the word *diaphoros* is used, besides this, is Rom. 12, 6, where by *diaphora charismata*, differing, or diverse gifts, is unquestionably meant, several differing kinds, or sorts of gifts, as the words following demonstrate, viz : prophesying, teaching, governing, &c. And that the apostle has a special reference to sprinkling, as one kind of baptism, is evident from verse 13, where he expressly mentions over some of the principal of the legal purifications, (differing baptisms,) concerning which he had just spoken, verse 10.

Another instance of the use of this word is, Levit. 19, 19 : "Thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed," *ou chataspeireis diaphoron, diverso semine*. Lat. vulg. The Greek word here is the same as in the before-mentioned instances, viz : Rom. 12, 6, Heb. 9, 10, and signifies a difference in the species of seed, a mingling of which was under the law prohibited. The apostle qualifies the word *baptismos* baptisms, with the same word which expressed the different kinds



of seed. Here, then, is FULL PROOF that the scripture uses the word *baptismos* baptism, in so large a sense, that sprinkling is evidently comprehended, if not chiefly intended. Sprinkling, then, in the judgment of the apostle, is an authentic and divinely inspired mode of baptism.

One other case, we find in the Apochrypha, where *baptizo* is clearly and undeniably used for sprinkling. Ecc. 34, 25 : *Baptizomenos apo nekrou*. "He that is cleansed or purified from the pollutions of a dead body." This is evidently spoken of one who had observed the law which we find, Num. 19th chapter, where God commanded, that a water of separation, a purification for sin, should be made from the ashes of a red heifer, and says, verse 11 : "He that toucheth the body of a dead man, shall be unclean seven days." Verse 12 : "He shall purify himself with it (the water of purification) on the third day." 13 : "Whosoever toucheth the dead body of a man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from Israel, because the water of separation was not *sprinkled* upon him." And when a person died in a tent, 14 and 18, a clean person must *sprinkle* the same upon the tent, upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there." Verse 19 : "A clean person shall *sprinkle* upon the unclean." The pollution of a dead body, was an emblem of the pollution of sin ; and the water of purification from the ashes of the red heifer, was an emblem of the blood of Christ ; which, when sprinkled on us, purifieth the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. This was one of the most burdensome services of the typical dispensation. Deaths were oft and in every place ; this water, therefore, must be constantly kept in every town and village.

We say, then, that this passage in the Apochrypha, speaks of one who had observed this law of purification by *sprinkling*. The action is expressed by *baptizomenos*, the passive participle from the verb *baptizo*, a word well understood. It is then, undeniably clear, that one meaning at least of the word *baptizo*, is to sprinkle, because it is here employed to express an extensive branch of purification, which was expressly required to be done by *sprinkling*, and only by *sprinkling*.

There are two passages, viz : Rom. 6, 4, and Colos. 2, 12,



which, at first sight, seem to favor the idea of immersion ; but, upon full consideration, do not. " Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death. Therefore, we are buried with him into death. That like, as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life : For, if we have been planted together, in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our *old man* is crucified with him, that the *body of sin* might be destroyed, that we should not serve sin. A little attention will convince us that the apostle, is speaking *not* about the action or mode of baptism, but about the meaning, the purpose and design of it ; that having been baptized into Christ, into his death, we are under obligation to walk in newness of life. Having been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be in the likeness of his resurrection. Having had our old man crucified, and the body of sin destroyed, we shall no longer serve sin.

Here is a beautiful antithesis ; opposite things are contrasted, and the latter, viz : to walk in newness of life, to be in the likeness of Christ's resurrection, no longer to serve sin, &c., stand opposed to, and are contrasted with the *former*, viz : to being baptized into Christ, into his death ; to being buried with him, by baptism, into death ; to being planted together, with him, in the likeness of his death, and to knowing that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Who, then, does not easily see, that the latter, viz : to walk in newness of life, to be in the likeness of Christ's resurrection, and no longer to serve sin, is a moral or spiritual concern altogether ? It is then equally clear that the former, viz : to be baptized into Christ, into his death, planted in the likeness of his death, crucified as to the old man, and having the body destroyed, is a moral and spiritual concern also : Otherwise, the *antithesis* is destroyed, and the apostle's argument in favor of our obligation to an holy life, is very much weakened, if not destroyed. Now, it is very clear, from the argument of the apostle, that from baptism does arise an obligation, to walk in newness of life, to put on Christ, &c. : But it is equally clear, also, that the placing of the body in any position, whether horizontal or perpendicular, whether under water, or wet only with a few

drops, can confer no obligation to a holy life. No obligation, we say, can be conferred by the action or mode of baptism. It can be conferred only by the nature, intent and design of it. Therefore, walking in newness of life, putting on Christ, &c., cannot be predicated of the action or mode of baptism, but only of the nature and design of it. But if, in the true sense of this passage, we are baptized into Christ, buried with him by baptism into his death, crucified as to the old man, then let the mode or action be what it may, whether by sprinkling, pouring or plunging, such is the nature, meaning, and design of the ordinance, as a law of Christ, a sacrament, that it does confer an obligation to a holy life.

Mr. Henry, in his commentary on this place, says : "It is plain that it is not the *sign*, (that is, the action or mode of baptism,) but the thing *signified*, that the apostle here calls being buried with Christ." Most certainly, then, if any persons suppose, that to have their bodies plunged under water, and raised out again, answers the apostle's requirement and instruction, they have at best only the sign, instead of the thing signified ; yes, the shadow, instead of the substance.

Again : As we have seen—Being buried into death, planted in the likeness of Christ's death, being crucified as to the old man, having the body of sin destroyed, stand *opposed* to walking in newness of life, and to being in the likeness of his resurrection ; and they are not only opposed, but are *consequently connected* ; and who does not see, not only the defect, but the glaring absurdity in the apostle's argument, if we suppose the former relate to putting the body under water, and the latter to the spiritual exercises of the soul!!! There must be a spiritual death, or else there can not be a spiritual life and resurrection. It is then evident, that in these passages, the apostle had no reference to the mode of baptism. And we may also fairly conclude, that there is no passage in the New-Testament, from whence it can fairly be deduced, that immersion, as the mode of baptism, was ever used at all.

We will now consider the several instances where baptism was administered. The first, is that of John ; and from the expressions, "There went out unto him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan," John probably baptized about two millions of people, and his ministry

did not exceed a year and an half. His great business too was preaching repentance, and preparing the *way* of the Lord. His baptizing does not seem to be any hindrance to his preaching. Let us then inquire, If John had stood in the water the whole of his time, could he have baptized so many by plunging them under water? Common sense answers in the negative, and no intimation is given of their having any change of garments. Baptists seem to be totally at a loss about the manner of John's baptizing; that is, whether the subjects were baptized with or without clothing. Mr. Robinson mentions several times in his book, that it was his opinion, that in the primitive ages of christianity, the people were *naked* when they received baptism. Others think they had on their ordinary apparel. The former would be not only immoral, and contrary to express divine injunction, Exod. 20, 26, but abhorrent to all religious feelings; and the latter would be inconsistent with the health of the subjects, especially in the colder seasons of the year.

We will close our remarks on this case, with a quotation from Dr. Guise, as follows:—"I cannot think that such prodigious numbers as came to John, could be baptized in the way of immersing their whole bodies under water, or that they were provided with change of raiment for it, which is no where intimated, nor seems to have been practicable for such vast multitudes; and yet, they could not be baptized naked with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel with safety. *It seems, therefore, to me, that the people stood in ranks near to, or just within the edge of the river, and John passing along before them, cast water upon their faces with his hand, or some proper instrument, by which he might easily baptize many thousands in a day.* And this way of pouring water on them, most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them, with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, Mat. 3, 11; Mark 3, 1; Luke 3, 16, and John 1, 33, and which was eminently fulfilled, when the Holy Ghost, in appearance of cloven tongues like fire, sat upon them. And this is expressly called baptizing them with the Holy Ghost, and in opposition to, or answering to John's baptizing them with water. Acts 1, 15: "For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." This is spoken of as coming upon them, poured out upon them,



shed forth upon them." This opinion of Dr. Guise, baptists have endeavored to ridicule, but have been unable to present any fair answer.

The baptism administered by the disciples of Christ, while he was with them, is next. John 3, 25 : "Then arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews, about *purifying*. And, they come unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, the same baptizeth, (purifieth,) and all men come unto him." It is here evident, that baptizing and purifying are used synonymously, or interchangeably, for the same thing. John's baptism was a legal purification, and so was that administered by the disciples while Jesus was with them ; and "the manner of the Jews to purify (baptize) was with water-pots containing two or three firkins apiece." John 2, 6 : "Now Jesus, it is said, John 4. 1, Made and baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples." And yet, they never frequented rivers, and other large collections of water. *They*, it seems, could baptize any where, at any time, and on the shortest notice, and without the least inconvenience, which certainly excludes the idea of immersion.

When the three thousand were baptized, Acts 2d, Peter began to preach at the third hour of the day, and we cannot reasonably suppose they began to baptize until sometime late in the afternoon ; and yet, there was sufficient time to baptize the three thousand on the same day. Such an event was unexpected, and of course no preparation was made before hand. And there is no circumstance mentioned, or any way connected, which would in the least degree favor the idea of immersion ; but, such circumstances are connected, as render such an idea improbable, if not incredible ; especially, the shortness of the time, the destitution of a convenient place, suitable clothing, and other things. But if water was brought in vessels, and the ordinance was administered by sprinkling, or pouring on, all would be without difficulty.

Cornelius, it appears, was baptized at home, in his own house. Acts 10, 47, Peter says : "Who can forbid water, that these should not be baptized ?" Not who can forbid water to run in a river, or stand in a lake : But, who can forbid to bring and apply water, that these may have the benefit

of the christian purification ? His expression is very unnatural, if he meant plunging, but natural enough if he meant sprinkling or pouring.

Saul appears to have been baptized in the house of Judas, where Annanias found him. He had been three days without meat and drink. He was much exhausted with fasting, with violent distress and agitation of mind, and is now required to be baptized before he eats or drinks. He is required not to go away, but to rise up, and this probably was as much as he could do. Acts 9, 18: "And he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized." 22, 16: "Arise and be baptized."

Concerning the baptism of the Eunuch by Philip, Acts 8, 33, where it is said, "They both went down into the water, both Philip and Eunuch, and he baptized him," we have before shewn that the prepositions *in*, *into*, *out of*, &c., are so often used, where it is certainly known that they mean only *at*, *to*, and *from*, that we have no evidence that they went further than to the edge of the water, where Philip might take up water with his hand, and sprinkle him. To suppose otherwise, would leave the narrative very imperfect ; because, according to the narrative, they went both together, one as far as the other. But there is another reason in this case, much more conclusive still, in favor of sprinkling, which is this : The Eunuch, with deep attention and solicitude, was reading a prophecy of Christ, Isaiah 52, 13, and continued through the next chapter. Philip expounded this prophecy, near the beginning of which, it was foretold that Christ should institute baptism by sprinkling. "Behold, my servant shall deal very prudently ; he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high ; so shall he *sprinkle* many nations." Philip had been expounding this prophecy, which expressly foretold that Christ should institute this ordinance of baptism by *sprinkling* ; and it is unreasonable to suppose that Philip, with the sacred text now before his eyes, would administer the ordinance in direct contradiction to it.

The baptism of Lydia, we are informed of, Acts 15, 12. This was performed by the side of a river, but she did not come there for that purpose. She was there when the Lord opened her heart. Had she been converted at some distant place, and then repaired to this place with her household, for

the purpose of being baptized, the case would have appeared different. But as it is, she and her household were here. A religious meeting was held here, she was converted, and the household baptized, and certainly there is no evidence that they were plunged.

In the same chapter, verse 33, we are informed of the baptism of the jailer and *his* family : " And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his straightway." Paul and Silas had been taken, scourged, and put into the inner prison. At midnight there was an earthquake : the jailer was struck with fear ; he collected his family ; Paul instructed them ; the *jailer* was converted ; he washed their stripes and was baptized, *he* and all *his*. The whole of this business, viz : the collection of his family, Paul's instruction, his washing their stripes, and the baptism of himself and all *his*, appears to have been done in the outer prison, in the space of one hour. He brought them out from where they were, which was the inward prison. After the business was accomplished, he brought them into *his* house ; that is, into his own apartment. The whole appears to be under one roof ; and the whole building was a prison, viz : an outer prison, an inner prison, and the keeper's own apartment. Is there any thing in this account that looks as if they went away to a river or a pond for immersion ? Certainly there is not. Every circumstance forbids such an idea. Had it been necessary to go abroad for baptism, it would probably, under common circumstances, have been delayed until morning. And this case was attended with special reasons for delay, if it had been necessary to go abroad. Paul and Silas were prisoners, and had the jailer gone out with them, it would have subjected him to a severe penalty, and probably would have cost him his life. Very strict orders were given him when he received them, and how much he feared the penalty, if the least blame fell upon him, we are informed, verse 27. Neither would the apostles have encouraged him to get himself into such a difficulty. The apostles, too, were put into prison contrary to express law—had a right to a recompense, and were determined to have it ; which *right* they would have forfeited, if they had once left the prison. When the magistrates discovered their error, and the difficulty they had brought them-



selves into, they sent the sergeants to tell them they might go. All they wanted was to get them once fairly over the sills of the prison doors. With firmness and holy indignation, Paul replies : " They have beat us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison, and now do they thrust us out privily ? Nay, verily, let them come themselves and fetch us out." Verse 37 : " And the magistrates came and besought them, and *brought* them out."

It is, then, evident that this whole family, the jailer and all *his*, were baptized without loss of time, in the outer prison ; and the only reasonable conclusion is, that water was brought in some convenient vessel sufficient for *sprinkling*. This case, as well as others, is destitute, not only of evidence, but even of probability of their being baptized by immersion.

Finally : Whoever reads the New Testament, with any degree of attention, will at once perceive that vast multitudes were baptized by John, by the disciples of Christ, while he was with them, and by the apostles after his resurrection. If, then, immersion had been the mode of baptism, it must have been a work of labor to baptize such multitudes. It must have taken up considerable time. Sometimes they must have gone a considerable way for water. Sometimes there must have been great inconvenience about clothing. Sometimes it must have been delayed on account of sickness or severity of weather. But, contrary to all this, it is spoken of as being easy and convenient, at any time, and at any place. No mention is made of changing garments, either before or after baptism, nor of any one's going from the place where he was when he first desired baptism, nor of any one circumstance necessarily connected with immersion.

In other matters, such circumstances are mentioned. When the blind man came to Jesus, Mark 10, 50, mention is made that he cast away his garment. When the Jews stoned Stephen, Acts 7, 58, mention is made that they laid down their clothes, at a young man's feet, named Saul. When Judith, 10, 3, washed her body all over in water, mention is made that she put off her clothes to do it. But when **THOUSANDS, AND TEN THOUSAND TIMES TEN THOUSAND**, were baptized, no mention is made of any such circumstance. If, then, immersion had been the mode, it does seem as if some of these circumstances, at

some time, would have been mentioned. Something would have been said about going from the place of worship ; something about a change of garments, or some instances wherein baptism had been delayed, on account of sickness, or extremity of weather, as we often find it is by those who practice immersion now. But here all is silent ; not a circumstance is any where, or at any time mentioned, which is necessarily connected with immersion. The proof of it, therefore, is insufficient.

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## SECTION XX.

### MODE OF BAPTISM—ARGUMENTS FOR SPRINKLING, CLEAR AND UNDENIABLE.

*Arg. 1.* Immersion is always more or less inconvenient ; sometimes endangers health, and even life, and sometimes cannot, with propriety or safety, be performed at all. In many instances, people on beds of sickness, and near the close of life too, do either experience religion, or else have their former hopes so renewed and strengthened, that, in the judgment of charity, are proper subjects of baptism, and have an earnest desire to leave their dying testimony in favor of their dying Saviour, by receiving baptism, professing his name, and uniting with his church here on earth. And shall these, with feelings more tender, and desires more ardent than can be described, be denied the privilege of near and intimate communion with their God and Saviour, only because they cannot endure the severity of a total immersion under water ? We ask, then, is it consistent with the tender compassion of our heavenly Father, who will have mercy, and not sacrifice, to appoint in his church, an ordinance which would not be easy, convenient, and safe for all persons, and in all circumstances of health or sickness, and at all seasons of the year ? Humanity shudders at the thought ; and the plainest dictates of common sense decide, that immersion was never of divine appointment.

*Arg. 2.* Under the former dispensation, when the pollution

of man was the same as now, and the divine purity the same as now, God was pleased to appoint sprinkling to purify his people for visible communion with him in holy ordinances. The blood of the paschal lamb, Exod. 12, 48, one of the most distinguished emblems of the blood of Christ, must be sprinkled on the door posts of the houses, when the destroying angel passed over them. This consecrated the *family*. The blood of the sin-offering, Exod. 29, 20, must be sprinkled. The leper, Levit. 14, 7, must be sprinkled. The water of separation, Num. 19th chapter, which was a purification for sin, must be sprinkled. We will here quote only what St. Paul mentions concerning sprinkling. Heb. 9, 19: "For when Moses had spoken to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves, and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying: "This is the blood of the *testament*, which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he *sprinkled*, likewise, with blood, both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry." All these, and others which might be mentioned, were figures, types, symbols, patterns, and emblems of gospel purifications, and of the blood of Christ, and do most clearly shew, that the christian purification, viz: *baptism*, must be by sprinkling also.

*Arg. 3.* Prophecies, which speak of the gospel dispensation, expressly foretell an ordinance of sprinkling, which can be none other than baptism. Isaiah 44, 3: "I will *pour water* upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will *pour my spirit* on thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Here is a perfect coincidence between the application of the *water*, and of the *spirit*. Both are by pouring. Again, Isaiah 52, 13: "Behold my servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high. So shall he *sprinkle* many nations." No one can doubt, that this is a prophecy of Christ, and the gospel dispensation. Again, Ezek. 36, 25: "Then will I *sprinkle* clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. And I will put my spirit within you." Christ and the gospel state of his kingdom are the burden of these prophecies, and water *sprinkled* is the symbol of the blood of Christ for the remission of sins. On these words, "I will



sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean," Mr. Henry has this comment: "Both the blood of Christ, sprinkled upon the conscience to purify that, and to take away the sense of guilt, as those that were sprinkled with the water of purification, were thereby discharged from their ceremonial uncleanness; and the grace of the spirit, sprinkled on the soul, to purify it from all corrupt inclinations and dispositions." Mr. Henry is here speaking of the thing signified. The sprinkling of water was the sign, but the other, viz: the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, or the grace accompanied, was the thing signified. These prophecies foretell an institution of pouring, and of sprinkling clean water, and of the sprinkling of many nations; whereas, *only one nation*, the *Jews* under the former dispensation, had the benefit of sprinkling ordinances. The water must be clean or pure, to denote the cleanness or purity of the spirit. St. Paul has these prophecies in view, when he says, Heb. 10, 22: "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed (sprinkled) with pure water." Again: Under the former dispensation, *mixed* water was *sprinkled*, but in the before-mentioned prophecies, it is foretold, that the time should come, when pure, simple, unmixed, or clean water should be poured or sprinkled upon God's people: yes, upon many nations, which never took place until gospel times. Now, prophecy is the sacred declaration of God himself, concerning what *must*, not concerning what *may*, but concerning what *must* take place. So sure as it is spoken, so sure it *must* be fulfilled, and we are bound to conform to it. Why must Jesus be born in Bethlehem—go into Egypt—stop at Nazareth on his return—be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver—his garments divided, and lots cast for his raiment, &c., but to fulfil the prophecies? The apostles considered a prophetic declaration, concerning practical duty, the same as a *command* from the Lord. Acts 13, 47: "Lo we turn to the Gentiles, for so the Lord hath commanded us, saying: "I have set thee for a light to the Gentiles." We are, then, under the same binding *obligation* to administer the ordinance by sprinkling, as the apostles were to go to the Gentiles to preach the gospel. Again: As the water of separation was an emblem of purification for sin by the blood of Christ, in after time to be shed, so baptism, the christian purification for

sin, is an emblem of the same blood of Christ, now already shed, Acts 2. 38, "for the remission of sins." As the blood of atonement was sprinkled, so we, according to the prophecies and apostolic example, Heb. 12, 24, "come to the blood of *sprinkling*;" and 1st Pet. 1, 2, "to the *sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ." When the apostle says: "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water," he evidently speaks in allusion to the before-mentioned prophecy, where God says: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you." Clean water and pure water are the same thing. So also sprinkling and washing are the same thing. We are said, Rev. 1, 5, to be *washed* from our sins in the blood of Christ; but as we have seen, the same thing in other passages is expressed by sprinkling. "We come to the blood of sprinkling"—"to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." This is further evidence, that the apostles did, in conformity to the prophecies, administer baptism by sprinkling clean, or pure water. It is not the water, either less or more, but the blood of Christ, which takes away sin. The water is the *sign*, the blood of Christ the thing signified, and a few drops of water sprinkled are a more perfect sign, than a vast quantity, which cannot be sprinkled.

It may be useful here to repeat, that washing and sprinkling are used for the same thing. Psalm 51, 7: "Purge me with hissope, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." These expressions allude to the ordinance of cleansing the leper, or one who has touched a dead body, which was by sprinkling him with a bunch of hissope dipped in the water of separation. But what we wish to remark here is, that this act of *sprinkling*, is expressly called *washing*. So also, Rev. 1, 5: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood." But if we compare this with Heb. 12. 24, this being was shed in the blood of Christ, is to be sprinkled with the blood of Christ. Washing and sprinkling are used interchangeably, or synonymously the one for the other.

*Arg. 4.* The Greek words *bapto*, *baptizo*, and *baptismos*, being often used for a partial wetting, and also for sprinkling, we may conclude that in the religious use and application of them to the christian ordinance, sprinkling most *properly* answers their meaning and intent; and, as in the preced-

ing section, we have entered into a full investigation of their meaning, it is unnecessary here ; which, if the reader does not recollect, he is requested to turn back, and again refresh his mind with what was there said concerning them.

*Arg. 5.* The descent of the Holy Ghost, upon the hearts of men, is expressly called baptism. “I, indeed,” said John, “baptize you with water ; but he (Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” This is a wonderful passage. The same word *baptize*, is here used to express the manner of purifying both with water and with the spirit. The meaning of the word then, especially in the religious and sacramental use of it, must of course be the same in both. “I, indeed, *baptize* you with water ; but he shall *baptize* you with the Holy Ghost.” Each baptism is perfectly conformable, the one to the other—John’s with water, Christ’s with the spirit. The passage before mentioned, is of such importance, that we find it recorded in each of the four Gospels, viz : Mat. 3, 11 ; Mark 1, 8 ; Luke 3, 16 ; John 1, 33. The same passage is also quoted Acts 1, 5, and applied expressly to the pouring out of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost ; and is again expressly called *baptizing* them, with the Holy Ghost, in a manner answering to John’s baptizing with water. There must then, have been a perfect conformity, or likeness, as far as mode or manner was concerned. It would have been incongruous, in translating these passages, to have used the word *plunge*. I, indeed, *plunge* you with water, but he shall *plunge* you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. Or, to say, I, indeed, *plunge* you with water, but he shall *sprinkle* you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire, (which like cloven tongues shall sit upon you,) would totally destroy the unity of the sentence. But, if the sense be thus, I indeed *baptize* you, with water sprinkled, or poured upon you ; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, which shall descend upon you, and with cloven tongues as of fire, which shall descend and sit upon you, there is then nothing incongruous, because the coming of the spirit, upon the heart, to change, to renew, and to sanctify it, is by *affusion*, and is represented by the falling of the rain, and the dew. Peter says, Acts 2, 17, that God had fulfilled his ancient promise, that he would pour out his spirit. And again, verse 33 : “Having received the promise of the Holy Ghost, he (Christ) hath *shed forth*



this which ye now see and hear." This *pouring out*, this *shedding* forth of the influences of the divine spirit, at Pentecost, was baptizing them with the Holy Ghost, answering to John's baptizing with water. The same may be said of the appearance of fire which sat upon them. By this wonderful *pouring out* of the spirit, the apostles were enabled to speak, and sinners to repent and believe. And the same word baptism is applied, not only to that extraordinary *affusion* of the divine spirit at Pentecost, but to all others where sinners are renewed and born into the kingdom of Christ. 1st Cor. 12, 3: "For by one spirit we are all *baptized* into one body." How, then, can we have clearer demonstration that the true meaning of the word baptize, especially in the religious and sacramental use of it, is sprinkling or pouring? Or, that the true mode of baptism, according to the divine will, as illustrated by the baptism of the spirit, is by *affusion*, sprinkling, or pouring; because, by the sprinkling, pouring, or shedding forth of the spirit, God himself baptizes the heart? Who, then, can suppose, that with all this light and evidence before their eyes, the apostles on the day of Pentecost, baptized the three thousand in any other mode than by *affusion*?

Arg. 6. "Baptism," says Mr. Cruden, "signifies (1) the outward ordinance, or sacrament, wherein the washing with water, represents the cleansing of the soul from sin, by the blood of Christ. (2) Inward spiritual washing, whereby the gifts and graces of the spirit *signified*, by the outward *sign*, are really and actually bestowed." The outward ordinance is the *sign*, the inward *grace* is the thing signified. They must, then, compare and agree with each other, or else the one can not be the *sign* of the other. But, the operation of the spirit of God, in changing the heart, is by *affusion*. The spirit is poured out, shed forth, shed down, and the application of the blood of Christ, is by sprinkling. They are spoken of as answering the one to the other. Isaiah 44, 3: "I will *pour* water; I will *pour* my spirit." Ezek. 36, 25: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you. I will put my spirit within you, and a new heart will I give you." This pouring, or sprinkling of clean water, is the *sign*, the new heart, by the operation of the spirit, is the thing signified. So the declaration of John, where both are called by the same name, *baptism*: "I indeed, baptize you with water, but he shall bap-

tize you with the Holy Ghost." Both are expressed by the same figure ; that is, of being born : " Except a man be *born* of the water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Both are expressed by the same *action* : " Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed (sprinkled) with pure water." Washing and sprinkling, as we have seen, are the same. The thing signified and wrought by the spirit, is by affusion, pouring, sprinkling, &c. The sign, then, must be by sprinkling, or else the sign can not compare with the thing signified, nor the thing signified with the sign.

Again : Christ being the High Priest of the everlasting covenant, it pertained to him, in his priestly office, to baptize with the spirit ; and as a sign and symbol of it, to institute in his church the ordinance of baptism with water. Thus, in the passage before noticed, it was foretold of him : " So shall he sprinkle many nations." And in the person of Christ, the prophet Ezekiel says : " I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean." So the forerunner of Christ says : " I, indeed, baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." And St. Paul says : " By one spirit, we are all baptized into one body." Here, then, is matter of plain fact, and easy for every one to understand. The same act or action which in one passage is expressed by the word *sprinkle*, is in the others expressed by the word *baptize*. To sprinkle, then, and to baptize, mean the same thing.

*Arg. 7.* The water, the spirit, and the blood, *agree* in one. 1st John, 5, 6 : " This is he that came by water and by blood, even Jesus Christ ; not by water only, but by water and by blood ; and it is the spirit that beareth witness, because the spirit is truth." Here, again, is the water and the blood, the two divinely appointed elements of our purification and cleansing, witnessed by the spirit of truth. St. John proceeds : " For there are three that bear record in heaven : the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are *one*. And there are three, that bear witness in earth : the spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three *agree* in one." So true as there are three that bear record in heaven, and these three are *one*, so true also there are three, that bear witness in earth, and these three *agree* in one. This is not a mental

agreement, but a similarity, a coincidence in circumstances, and manner of action, and application. Two of them, viz : the spirit and the blood, are inward on the heart, but the water is outward on the body. The spirit is the *agent*, the water is the visible sign ; the blood is the blood of atonement, or the blood of the covenant, which Jesus shed on the cross, and is the price of our redemption. "By his own blood he hath now entered into the holy place." These three, viz : the spirit, the water, and the blood, agree in one. These are God's witnesses. He hath joineth them together, and no man may put them asunder.

The application of the water outwardly, is the *sign* of the affusion of the spirit, and the application of the blood of Christ, to purify and cleanse the heart. By these, we are washed, we are sanctified, we are cleansed :

1st. By the spirit. 1st Cor. 6, 7 : "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified by the *spirit* of our God."

2d. By the water. Eph. 5, 26 : "That he might sanctify and cleanse it, (the church,) with the washing of water, by the word."

3d. By the blood. Heb. 13, 12 : "Wherefore, Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood." These are Christ's witnesses on the earth.

The SPIRIT is one ;

The WATER is one ;

The BLOOD is one ;

And these three *agree* in ONE :

Two are *internal* ; and one is *external*.

But what is the mode of application ? or, where is the evidence of agreement ? In plunging, or in sprinkling ? Now, if we certainly know how any one of them is applied, we know, as certainly, how all are applied, for all *agree in one*. How, then, is the spirit applied ? By affusion ; that is, by sprinkling or pouring. Prov. 1, 23 : "I will *pour* my spirit unto you." Isaiah 44, 3 : "I will *pour* my spirit on thy seed." Zech. 12, 10 : "I will *pour* upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication." It is compared to the coming down of the rain, and the falling of the dew. Hosea 10, 12 : "Till



he come and rain righteousness upon you." That is, pour out his spirit upon you. 14, 5 : "I will be as the dew to Israel." That is, my spirit shall fall gently, and constantly as the dew. So Acts 2, 7, 33, Peter speaks of the *pouring out* of the spirit, and of the shedding forth of the Holy Ghost. And Titus 3, 6 : "Which he *shed* on us abundantly through Jesus Christ." These passages plainly speak of the coming down of the spirit, as the rain, and as the dew ; by which the heart is sprinkled, the heart is baptized. This operation of the spirit is expressly, as we have seen, called baptism. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." "By one spirit we are all baptized into one body." This gives us the true and definite meaning of the word baptize, especially in the religious and sacramental use of it. And how is the *blood* applied ? By sprinkling. We are washed, cleansed, and purified, by the blood of Christ sprinkled. "Ye are come to the blood of sprinkling." "Elect, through sanctification of the spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." The spirit, then, is applied by *sprinkling* ; the blood is applied by *sprinkling* ; and, by these, the heart is *sprinkled* from an evil conscience ; that is, regenerated. It is then, clear and certain, that the water *must* be applied in the same way.

We again repeat, that there is a clear and perfect coincidence of expression : "I will *pour* water on him that is thirsty." "I will *pour* my spirit," &c. "I will *sprinkle* clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. I will put my spirit within you, and a new heart will I give you." These are express predictions and promises of gospel times. The water is poured ; the spirit is poured : The water is sprinkled ; the spirit is sprinkled. So, also, in the New Testament, there is the same coincidence of expression. We are baptized with the water ; we are baptized with the spirit. We are born of the water ; we are born of the spirit. We are cleansed by the water ; we are cleansed by the spirit. There are three that bear witness in the earth ; the spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree in *one*. The water is a visible *sign* of invisible *grace*. So much of it, therefore, and so much only, as is sufficient for a *sign*, to represent the thing signified, is suitable for the ordinance. *Sprinkling* only can be a fit and proper sign of *sprinkling*. Plunging, is not only unscriptural, but highly improper. Nothing can be more

incongruous, than plunging to represent the affusion of the spirit, and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ.

Being in conversation, a short time ago, with a respectable Baptist minister, he admitted that the prophecies, especially the one, Isaiah 52, 15 : "So shall he sprinkle many nations ;" and the one, Ezek. 36, 25 : "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean," would decide in favor of sprinkling. But, said he, there are two strong objections against such an interpretation of them. And what are they ? The first, he replied, is, that God says that *he* will do it. He does not say that his ministers shall do it. Reply was made, that the plain and natural understanding of the text must be, that it should be done, not by God in person, but by his ministers, by his direction, and in his name. So, in repeated instances, king Solomon is said to build the Temple, when it was done only by his direction and according to his order. The same objection has been made in several publications, which have been written in favor of immersion, that the before-mentioned passage cannot foretell baptism by sprinkling ; because, in the passage it is said, God shall do it. And certainly, if our opponents can bring no better objection than this, they had better bring none. Well, said my brother, I have another objection, which will set aside your interpretation of the before-mentioned text, if nothing else will. And what is that ? Why, said he, we are commanded to be immersed ; therefore, your exposition of the prophecies, cannot be true." *Commanded to be immersed !* I am astonished that I have never read such a command ! Will you be so kind as to point me to the book, chapter, and verse, which contains such a command ? Why, said he, we are commanded, to be baptized ; and the word baptism signifies, to put our whole bodies under water. And, being commanded to be baptized, is the same thing as being commanded to be immersed, whether you believe it or not. Reply was made again : If we can believe that the priests who bore the ark, Joshua 3, 3, 13, when their feet only were dipped in the brim of the water, had their whole bodies immersed under water ; if we can believe that when Nebuchadnezzar's body, which was only wet with dew, was totally immersed under water ; if we can believe that a lake of some considerable extent was immersed in the blood of a frog ; if we can believe that the

Pharisees, when they washed their hands, had their bodies immersed under water ; if we can believe that when the whole host of Israel passed through the Red Sea on dry ground and dry shod, had their bodies immersed under water ; if we can believe that the man mentioned, Num. 19th chap., who was required to be sprinkled, had his body put under water, then we may believe as you do, that the word baptism signifies a total immersion. And in this last case, you cannot shelter yourself in this, that the man was required to bathe his flesh and wash his clothes. He was cut off expressly, because the water of separation was not *sprinkled* upon him.

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## SECTION XXI.

### CLOSING REMARKS, ADDRESSES, &c.

In the preceding sections, we have seen that the evidence in favor of infant baptism is clear, beyond a reasonable doubt. We now proceed to say : The church covenant is an institution of our heavenly Father, containing promises and blessings, for the believer and his seed ; and God will not permit the believer to come without his seed. He will not receive parents without their children. It is not barely a permission to bring them, but a positive requirement. Abraham must bring his children. The proselytes must bring their children. When the Lord opened Lydia's heart, she must be baptized, and her household. When the Jailor believed, he must be baptized, and all his straightway. And it seems clearly enough to appear, that in some sense, God has connected internal grace with the external seal of his covenant, which he requires us to put on our children. Or, in other words, has he not promised the believing, faithful parent, saving mercy for his household ?

In the first covenant, Adam was a covenant head, and the seed were included with the parent, and became subject to the curse ; were made sinners, in consequence of the parent's sin. In providing, then, for the ruins of the fall, would it not be expected, that the infant seed must be included,



with the believing parents, and with them be the subjects of grace, and heirs of salvation? We say, in the ordinary course of God's dealing with his covenant people : because, what he may, out of the ordinary course of his dealings, do or not do for others not in covenant, is not the question. But if the infant seed were included in the first covenant, does it not seem to follow, from the very nature of the case, that they must be included in the second covenant also? Or, that the covenant of grace, which visibly embraces the seed of believers, as well as their parents, does *conditionally* secure the salvation of the seed, as well as the salvation of their parents?

Again : This thought seems further to be illustrated from the parallel between Adam and Christ, as stated by the apostle, in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the Romans. Verse 14 : "Death reigned from Adam, who was the figure of him that was to come." 18 : "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men, unto justification of life." 19 : "For as by one man's disobedience, many (in contrast with one who sinned) were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many (many again in contrast with one who obeyed) be made righteous." As the seed were involved in the curse, so were they contained in the grace exhibited. 20 : "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." 21 : "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." The meaning of the whole seems plainly to be this : Adam was a figure, *tupos*, type, or similitude, of Christ, (1st Cor. 15, 45) and as sin abounded through the disobedience of the first Adam, who was a covenant head, so grace much more abounded, through the obedience of the second Adam, Jesus Christ, who also was a covenant head. And, as sin had reigned unto death, by the disobedience of the first covenant head, even so must grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by the obedience of *one*, even Jesus Christ, the second covenant head. If, then, the former brought condemnation and *ruin* upon *all*, the latter, by his atonement, made provision for full redemption from that *ruin*. And when our first father, Adam, felt in himself the dreadful workings of sin, and was

borne down with the distressing consideration, that through his fall the same corrupt and sinful nature must be communicated to so many unborn millions of his race, what could alleviate his distress, but by being assured, that in God's merciful interposition, the grace prepared, exhibited, and offered, was commensurate with the evil which had occurred? And so we must understand the first great promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." If, then, sin and death reigned, being transmitted from parent to child, through the disobedience of the first covenant head, it must of course follow, that *provision* for salvation, equally extensive, must have been made by Christ, the second Adam, and offered freely for the acceptance of all, or else the parallel must in a great degree fail, which cannot be admitted; because, such an idea would be inconsistent with the whole tenor of the apostle's argument. Is it not then, clear, that the sanctification and salvation of the believing parent's seed, dying in infancy, is graciously secured, and that concerning those who live to be capable of receiving instruction, has not the believing parent the utmost reason to hope, that God's blessing will accompany his endeavors for their conversion to faith, and new obedience? On this ground only, that is, that in the covenant of grace provision is made for the seed, as well as for the parent, can we see a reason for God's dealing with believing parents, Abraham for instance, in the manner he has done? That he should take the seed of Abraham, and of other believing parents, into his family, and require them to be sealed with the seal of his covenant, the seal of the righteousness of faith, as the badge of their covenant relation with him, and that they should be denominated *holy*? The nature of the union or covenant relation between God and his church constitution, of parents and children, is expressed in terms the most clear and unequivocal possible. In addressing the Deity, the church collectively, parents and children together, are expressly denominated *his*. 1st Chron. 17, 22: "For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people forever, and thou Lord becamest their God." On the other hand, God himself, in addressing the church, uses language of the same import, concerning parents and children together, saying, Ezek. 16, 8, "I swear unto thee, and entered into covenant with thee, and thou becamest *mine*."

The terms are reciprocal, and that the children are included, is evident, from the 21st verse, wherein he upbraids them for their idolatry, saying : "Thou hast slain my children, which thou hast born unto me."

Again : The covenant, as established with the Patriarchs, and so with all believers, most clearly contains spiritual blessings for their seed. "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee, in their generations." Here the same good is promised to the parent for *his* children, as for himself. Being a God, is most clearly NOT one thing to the parent, and another to his child. If it means a grant of heaven to the parent on condition of his faith, and faithfulness, as unquestionably it does, why not to the seed also ? So in other passages of scripture, God's promises explain the subject, and justify us in taking the ground we do. Gen. 18, 19 : "For I know my servant Abraham, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they *shall* keep the way of the Lord." Here is a divine *promise* connected with parental duty. Here a covenant God engages, that Abraham's children and household shall keep the way of the Lord. This is a plain exposition or illustration of the covenant. The same also is illustrated in many other passages, a few of which we will notice. Deut. 4, 37 : "Because the Lord loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them." 10, 15 : "Only the Lord had a delight unto thy fathers, to love them, and chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day." 30, 6 : "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, that thou mayest live." Here is the same promise of regenerating grace for the seed as for the parents. Isaiah 44, 3 : "I will pour my spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thine offspring." And when about to bless his people, how often does God say that he did it in remembrance of his covenant with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob ? Exod. 2, 4, 6, is similar. So is Psalm 105, 8, 42, and Psalm 103, 17 : "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep his covenant." Here, again, on condition of the piety and faithfulness of parents, God's mercy and righteousness is promised to their children. Again, Prov. 22, 6 : "Train up a child



in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Many good divines have supposed, that this passage alone proved the point under consideration, viz : that it contained a promise that the child should be pious. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt of it, when taken in connection with the other passages before mentioned. So also this : "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

According to this gracious establishment, the duty of parents, in giving up their children in covenant, in commanding them, in training them up in the way they should go, in bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and the promise that they shall keep the way of the Lord, and when they are old they will not depart from it, are clearly connected. We say, by divine precept, and by promise, the duty of parents towards their children, and the operations of God's gracious spirit, in their hearts, in renewing, in sanctifying, and in preparing them for glory, are, by God's gracious covenant establishment, inseparably connected together. On condition, then, of the faithfulness of parents, the children will be *obedient*, will *keep* the way of the Lord, and will not depart from it ; that is, God engages his grace to change their hearts, and to work in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

In the next place, let us have recourse to matter of fact. It appears from Genesis, fourth chapter, that there was a succession of pious persons in the line of Seth, from Adam to Noah ; and how shall we account for it, but from the covenant mercy of God, and the faithfulness of parents in doing their duty to their children ? It was the same in the line of Shem, from Noah to Abraham, and in the line of Isaac, from Abraham to Joseph, the reputed father of Christ. We are told, also, that by faith, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, concerning things to come. By the faith of his parents, Moses was hid three months, and afterwards was an eminent instrument in the hand of God, for good to the church and nation. Joshua adhered closely to God's requirement of family religion, and said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." And we are told further, that the children of Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua ; but when parental duties were neglected, when the condition was not

performed, the promises of God to children were suspended, and the children grew up wicked. This was the case in the house of Eli. The sons of Eli were a striking instance, where grace was *not* bestowed, in consequence of parental neglect. Thus we have seen, that under the former dispensation, parents not only brought their children into covenant, and by God's command put the seal of the righteousness of their faith upon them, but by faith in Christ they blessed them, or rather obtained blessings for them. Heb. 11, 20: "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come." So, when infants were brought to Christ, Luke 18, 14, they were evidently brought by pious parents, who had faith to obtain blessings from him, and they succeeded. When the Saviour healed adults, he required of them personal faith. He was wont to say unto them, Be it unto you according to your *faith*. Mat. 9, 29. But, when he healed a paralytic man, Mat. 9, 2, whose mind was probably so enfeebled by disease, that he could not, or was incapable of exercising faith for himself, he was healed upon the faith of those who brought him. "Jesus seeing *their* faith, said unto the sick of the palsy," &c. He healed children also, upon the faith of those who brought them. For instance, he raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus, upon his faith. Mark 5, 41. He healed a servant of the centurion upon his faith. Luke 7, 9. He healed a woman's daughter upon the faith of the woman. Mat. 15, 28: "She cried, Lord have mercy on me, for my daughter is grievously vexed with the devil." And Jesus replied, "O woman, great is thy faith," and her daughter was made whole from that hour. And have not we the same encouragement to cry for our children? May we not say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. This child, and that child, is under the reigning power and dominion of sin. The case of Timothy, 2d Epistle, 1, 5, is in point. The unfeigned faith which dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and then in his mother Unice, dwelt also in him; and to how many more generations it reached, we cannot tell. These facts, and others which might be mentioned, speak a language not to be misunderstood, and with irresistible evidence, shew that no argument from the holy scriptures can be brought against the right of believers' infants to receive baptism, upon the faith of their parents. It is the sa-

cred symbol of God's holy spirit upon their hearts. The fullness and freeness of blessings of infinite worth, promised, purchased, and forever secured by the death of Christ, are confirmed by the facts just brought to view. On condition of the faithfulness of parents, grace is connected with the seal of God's covenant. Blessed privilege!!

From my own observation, for more than half a century, I am persuaded that many more of the children of the church, in times of revivals, are brought to experience religion, in proportion to the whole population, than there are of the unbaptized. I am also confirmed in this opinion, from statements which have been made by others. One brother from Massachusetts, with whom I correspond, and of whom I requested a statement on this subject, wrote me as follows: "Since my ordination, which is about twenty-seven years, there have been added to my church by profession 481. Adult baptisms, 112. Baptized in infancy, or early childhood, 369. It is my opinion that, taking the whole of those in society, who give evidence of piety, more than 4 to 1 were given up to God in infant baptism." Another brother in the ministry, living in New-Jersey, in whose society a revival commenced in November, 1825, wrote me that in June following, 97 were received into the church, 67 of whom were baptized in their infancy, and 30 were baptized when they were received into the church. In September following, 28 more were received, 21 of whom were baptized in their infancy, and 7 when they were admitted. The whole number received from that revival was 125; 88 were baptized in their infancy, and 37 when they were received into the church.

In the Journal and Telegraph, a religious paper printed at Albany, March 31, 1832, a letter was published, written by one of the professors in Yale College, from which the following is an extract: "One thing struck me forcibly during our last revival. Nearly all, who were under serious impressions, had some pious friend or relative who had sent them to College. Accordingly, very few needed baptism when they professed religion."

A great number of other testimonials, might be adduced, but are not necessary. What encouragement is here for believing parents to do their duty to their children? Doubtless



those pious friends, who sent those youth to College, were praying for them at home, and in answer to their prayers, the Holy Spirit was poured upon them while in the Seminary.

I only add, that in conversation with a Baptist brother, I related some of the testimony before-mentioned, and said to him, here are plain facts and evidences of the divine blessing, following the baptism of infants. Now, what can you say? He replied: "Though I do not believe in infant baptism, yet I am willing to own, that I do believe, that christians are blessed in publicly dedicating their children to God." This was owning at least half the truth.

In this connexion, we will consider some of God's promises to his church—his people in covenant. Psalm 87, 5: "And of Zion, it shall be said, This and that man was born in her." "The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there." Isaiah 59, 21: "My spirit, which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and forever, saith the Lord." Precious promises! Wonderful grace of God! In this way, generally speaking, God has in all ages, replenished and preserved his church, by bringing in the seed of believers.

It is also good for the parent, to be under covenant obligations to do all in his power, for the spiritual interest of his offspring. And this method of bringing children into covenant, gives the parent great advantage. It awakens in his heart all the tender sensibilities his nature is capable of, and increases and heightens his own sense of his obligation, by the law of nature, to the dear pledges of God's unspeakable love to him. So also it greatly increases his influence over his children. When he says to them, I have received you from the hand of God, your maker, and am under covenant obligations to bring you up for him, I did, in your infancy, dedicate you to him, in the solemn ordinance of baptism. I entered into vows and obligations, that I would teach you what God requires of you. I do it for your good, under the highest sense of my own duty. This will be likely to have influence with them, to solemnize their minds, and prepare the way for the spirit of God to apply to the heart and conscience of the children, the parent's most affectionate instruction:—

“What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?” was *urged* by the pious mother of king Lemuel: Prov. 31, 2.

Again: The encouragement which God is giving christian parents, to offer up their devout prayers, for blessings on their infant seed, in covenant, is unquestionably very great. Why did Jacob wrestle with God in behalf of his children? God had made a special promise to him, that he would be with him, and bring him back to his father's house in safety. This promise was what gave him such confidence and earnestness in prayer. He could pray in faith; yes, he could pray the prayer of faith, for what God had promised him. And when Daniel had found, by the prophecies of Jeremiah, that God had made promises to restore the Jews from their captivity, after *seventy* years, he was encouraged to offer up fervent prayers that God would fulfil those promises. So the apostles, having received of Christ a promise of the descent of the Holy Ghost, spent most of the time in prayer, from the ascension of Christ, to the day of Pentecost, for the fulfilment of that promise. It is worth every thing, to the Christian, if he can have a promise to plead. With what confidence does a child come to a parent, if he has a promise that he can plead? And with how much more confidence may the child of God come to his heavenly Father? So the prophet, Jeremiah 14, 9, and Daniel 9, 19, plead that they had been called by God's name; literally, that God's name had been called upon them. So God encourages people, 2d Chron. 7, 14. In the same manner the believing parent may be encouraged, and greatly strengthened, in his prayers for his children in covenant, because God has made gracious promises concerning them. On this account, the covenant established with Abraham, is by the apostles so often called *The Promise*; and the privilege of bringing children into it, was ever esteemed so exceedingly precious. We see in what light we ought to view the divine promises. They are made, that we may be encouraged in the use of means. To rest in the promises, and neglect duty, would be presumption. We have no reason to believe that the promise to Jacob would have been fulfilled in that way. He must pray; and not only pray, but send presents to his brother, to appease his anger. When we have done every thing in our power, we may then rely on

the divine promise. God has made his promises, not to slacken, but to encourage and quicken us in duty. Here let us enquire, Can any one pray the prayer of *faith*, without a promise to ground his faith upon? It is evident he cannot.

Again: The *goodness* of this institution is not to be denied, and its advantages are very great. We are taught not to despise "the day of small things." It is God's appointed way, and the consequences may be not only great, but lasting as eternity. It was but a small thing, apparently, for the children of Israel to sprinkle the posts of their doors, when the destroying angel was passing over them. But had they not done it, the angel of death would have entered, as he did into the houses of the Egyptians; but in consequence of their doing it, he passed over, and the families within those dwellings were preserved.

It was but a small thing for Naaman, the Syrian, to go and wash in Jordan; and his servant came near, and said, "My Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it?" It seems but a small thing for you to give up your children in baptism, but consequences of infinite and unspeakable interest may be connected with your performance of that duty.

We do not believe that baptism is regeneration, nor that it does positively secure salvation: But when we find baptism used for the *sign* of regeneration, the symbol of the purification of the heart, by the *affusion* of the holy spirit, and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, by which we have remission of sins, we must suppose that it is not of *little* consequence.

There is no instance in the scriptures, where salvation seems to be so closely connected with any other duty, as it is with *baptism*; not even with the duty of prayer. Yet, it is presumption to neglect prayer; and why not greater presumption to neglect the baptism of your children, where it can regularly be done? The servants of Naaman came near, and said, "My Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much more, when he saith unto thee, Wash and be clean?" His cure was connected with his washing, as was the preservation of the children of Israel in Egypt, with the sprinkling of the posts of their doors. Small matters are not to be despised,



because they are small, because very often God connects with them things of vast importance.

Let us only give the words of Christ their fair import, as common sense would decide it. "Except a man (*tis*, any one) be born of the water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." All sides grant, that to be born of the water, is to be baptized, and the kingdom here spoken of is the visible church, which is a state preparatory to the kingdom of God above. But Jesus says again: "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God." The instruction of the Saviour, then, was plainly this: Little children, according to all preceding dispensations of the covenant of grace have, and must have their standing in this kingdom. He says they must come to him, they belong to his kingdom, of which he says, none can enter, but such as are born of the water, that is, are baptized. And surely no pious parent can set light by an institution so sacred, and which, in the purest ages of the church, has been so highly esteemed. The language of the ancient fathers was: "The church had an order from the apostles to baptize children, because the apostles received it from Christ. Little children must be baptized for the remission of sins. It is the *sign* of the common redemption of mankind, and must not be denied to infants of whatever age." There is indeed such a connection between the water and the blood, that it should seem as if none can set light by the water, and yet place a proper estimate upon the blood. Christ has joined them together, in parallel streams they flowed from his wounded side, and no man may put them assunder.

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## SECTION XXII.

### REMARKS AND ADDRESSES—CONTINUED.

Many children, it is said, are taken from their parents providentially, while they are very young. They go into the army, and fall in battle, or they go to sea, and perish in the

waters, and never have much opportunity of receiving instruction ; and if their lives are spared, they are subject continually to the snares and temptations of wicked company, and vicious examples. Be it so ; but God has not confined himself to means. He is able to follow them, by his spirit which he has promised : and this, without doubt he does, for he is a faithful covenant-keeping God. Many instances have been known, where persons, while in such circumstances, have given clear evidences of a change of heart ; and how many may be converted, before their death, and are not able to give clear evidence of it, we cannot tell. The uncertainty where our children will be, what pursuits they will follow, what company they will fall into, what dangers will surround them, is no reason why we should neglect our duty, but a strong reason why we should be faithful to perform it, that we may at all times hope in the mercy of God, and be able always to plead his covenant promises, and unfailing faithfulness.

Many children, also, are taken away by early death.—Where is the foundation of the believer's hope, for the salvation of these, if it is not in the covenant mercy and faithfulness of God ? God hath said, "I will be their God." "I will circumcise the heart of thy seed." "I will pour my spirit on thy seed." How, then, can these *promises* to the *seed* of believers, in covenant, be made good to them when they die in infancy, or before they are capable of exercising reason and choice, except God sanctify and save them ? All children are polluted with a sinful nature, and do need the application of the blood of Christ, and the sanctifying influences of the divine spirit. How far this grace is, or is not granted to children out of covenant, we cannot tell. We have reason to hope for the salvation of all children who die in infancy. God's tender mercies are over all his works. This, however, is certain, that God has provided *better* consolation for his faithful covenant people, than he has for others. To bring children early into covenant, is his own institution, and a conspicuous part of his redeeming scheme. To those in covenant, and to no others, God has said, "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed." His covenant faithfulness cannot fail. David was much distressed, and filled with deep anxiety, for the life of his child ; but when it was dead, he was

comforted, saying : " I shall go to him, he shall not return to me." That is, he is gone where I shall go. He was confident that the child, when dead, was enjoying the same state of blessedness, which he himself should enjoy in a future world. So when Jesus said : " Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." And when he took them in his arms, and blessed them, and when he said again : " It is not the will of your heavenly father, that one of these little ones should perish," the whole was said, and done, concerning children in covenant, who had received the covenant seal, to whom the promises were made, viz : " I will be a God to thee and to thy seed." A few extracts from the Diary and Letters of that excellent woman and eminent saint, Mrs. HUNTINGTON, may in a clear manner shew the pure consolations which result to parents, from performing their duty in this respect, and its happy tendency towards their children.

JAN. 23, 1820 : " Next Sabbath, I expect to carry my little Joshua to the sanctuary, and devote him to that God whose he is. May the offering be accepted. May the first lisplings of his infant tongue, be the expression of holy and grateful affections to his Maker and Redeemer.

JULY 2, 1820 : " I think I did desire to say something profitable to my children to-day, and I have some token that it was so. I scarcely ever had more freedom in prayer, for them, and with them—that God would be pleased to speak by me to their hearts. They appeared solemn and affected. I find it a great assistance to me, in prayer for my children, to remember that God has been our God for many generations back."

In a letter to her eldest daughter, then from home, she writes as follows :—

SEPT. 10, 1820 : " God has been pleased to say, that he will not only be the God of believers, but of their seed after them. It has accordingly been the custom in all ages, for believing parents to dedicate their infant offspring to God, before the advent of the Saviour, by circumcision, and since that event by baptism. It has been your privilege to be born of parents professedly belonging to the blessed family of believers. You have been baptized. I will endeavor to explain to you the nature of that ordinance : In baptism, you



were *given to God as his child*. All your powers and faculties were consecrated to his service. Your parents, by that act, professed their determination to bring you up as a christian; that they renounced this world, as your portion, and took God for your portion. They vowed unto the Lord, that they would bring you up for him, and would strive to prevent your acquiring any habits, conforming to any fashion, and forming any friendships, whose probable tendency would be, to prevent your becoming a disciple of Christ. This is what your parents have done for you. But, in order to your being interested in God's precious covenant, you must cordially, willingly, and joyfully, make all this your own act. You must agree to what your parents have done. You must choose the Lord for yourself. Blessed children! who make such a choice. Wretched children, who trample on all these obligations, and make their way through all these vows and engagements, to the gulph of despair! O, my dear child, will you not go with your dear parents to heaven?"

In a letter to a friend, dated October 10, 1820, she writes thus: "With respect to our children, let us remember, God never calls his people to any duties, to which he has not pledged his own faithfulness, to give them strength to perform, if they look to him for it, in the way of his appointment.

Nov. 22: "I have been thinking to-day, of the terms of the new covenant, which I desire to lay hold of, for myself and for my *children*."

SEPT. 1: "The hand of the Lord has again touched me. On the 25th of last month, I was called home (from Bridge-water) to receive the last parting sigh of my beloved Joshua. Thus, the fond, the cherished babe left me, at a moment's warning. It fell upon me like a thunder-bolt. But my mind is comforted now. My child, my lamb, is in heaven."

SEPT. 8, 1821: "I live, though death has smitten another of my number. Elizabeth was taken from all her sorrows and sufferings, eleven days after my sweet babe. I have no doubt, both these little ones, are in heaven. They were given to God. They are not, because he has taken them."

To her son, at Andover Academy, she writes thus, Jan. 18, 1823: "I have had more earnest wrestlings of spirit, for you of late, than ever before. God encourages me to wait upon him, with crying and many tears, for you my son." And,

after urging many tender considerations, further observes : " You are descended, my dear J, from a long line of ancestors, on both sides, who were pious, and have finished their course, and gone to their gracious reward. Your dear father, early declared himself for Christ." Being near the close of life, at the age of about thirty, and about to leave her children, who for several years had been fatherless, she said, Oct. 20, 1823 : " God helps me, to trust the promise—Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them." Here we have a most striking testimony that *such* is the pious and rational pleasure, in publicly dedicating and giving to God, those children we have received from him ; *such* the advantage which a christian parent has, in giving instruction to his children, and in making religious impressions on their minds ; *such* the encouragement in prayer, to a faithful, covenant-keeping God, and *such* the solid peace and comfort, which God himself has provided for parents, when called to the painful trial of having their children taken away by death ; or, when called themselves to die, and leave their tender offspring behind them.

A long line of ancestors, who were pious, &c. : So Paul writes to Timothy, " When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also." Is not this then, The highway of holiness, the gate of the Lord's house, into which the righteous enter ? And are not here the footsteps of the flock, whither in all ages, the Lord's people have gone up ?

The following, we extract from the life of the Rev. Lemuel Haynes, Pastor of a Church in Rutland, (Vt.) page 151 : " A little boy, of twelve years old, joined the church a few days ago, being asked what was the means of his being awakened, he said, that he thought one night, that he had been given up to God in baptism, and he thought it to be his duty to give himself up to God. He is a remarkable instance of piety. I wished that our Baptist brethren had heard the relation." Here is a striking instance of the good effects of infant baptism. A train of reflection, in his mind, in consequence of his being given up to God in baptism, ended in his conversion ; and doubtless there may be thousands and millions of others. The impression made upon his mind, was

but a natural consequence, resulting from what had been done for him, in his infancy. What encouragement is there, for parents to give up their children to God, in this ordinance?

We shall close this treatise, by solemnly addressing,

- 1st. Ministers of the Gospel :
- 2d. Parents of Baptized Children : And
- 3d. Children and Youth who have been Baptized.

I. Ministers of the Gospel. My brethren, will you listen for a moment? It is in view of the solemn consequences, and awful responsibilities, connected with this subject, that an elder brother now addresses you. God has taught us to look to the youth, and rising generation, both for the increase and prosperity of his church. He has said, that *Christ shall have the dew of his youth*. And the kind notice which Jesus took of little children, and the tender concern which he manifested for their spiritual interest, are no doubtful indications of our duty towards them. From them he expects trophies of glory, answering to his amazing sufferings on the cross. If, then, these lambs of the flock of Christ, are left to wander and perish, can we, who are entrusted with the momentous concerns of his kingdom, quit our garments of the blood of souls?

It is a fact, much to be lamented, that however well christians may be indoctrinated in most subjects, there is among presbyterians, methodists, and congregationalists, too little instruction on this subject. Many parents, who prefer uniting with pedo-baptist churches, have neglected the baptism of their children, only because they do not understand the subject, and the nature of covenant blessings. Others, who are not able to defend infant baptism, against the cavils which have been thrown in their way, have become unsettled, and not unfrequently have renounced their own baptism, simply because they have not been properly instructed. Our opponents are watchful and crafty, to entangle with their subtleties, such as are unable to defend themselves. Some years ago, your brother, being in company with a Deacon of a congregational church, was surprised to find him wavering on the subject of infant baptism, and very soon he proposed a number of inquiries, both concerning the mode and sub-



jects of it. The man was really perplexed in his mind, and was laboring under difficulties which he wished to remove, but could not. He said, "I believe we must give up infant baptism." After some further conversation was had, and some statements were made, and he urged to consider the subject with candor, he said that he would do so, and would do nothing rashly. A year or more afterwards, the same persons, it so happened, met again, and he was asked, If his mind was any better satisfied on the subject of infant baptism? He replied: "I feel now well established; but, said he, when you saw me last, I was so worried and perplexed in my mind, that I was on the point of giving up my baptism, and every thing I had done in religion, and felt as if I must go over to the other side. Now, continued he, I am happily delivered from that delirium, for I can call it nothing else, and nothing would tempt me now, to be in the same condition again." But, sir, how came you in that state of feeling? He replied: "A baptist Elder came to my house, and among other things he said to me, 'How do you prove your infant baptism?' And not having paid much attention to the subject, I was not able to answer the cavils and objections which he threw in my way. He left me, but in a short time called again, professing to be very friendly, and gave me a book against infant baptism, which he desired me to read. My mind soon became perplexed and bewildered, and because I could not defend my *own side*, I was but too ready to suppose the other side *right*. But now, I bless God, I have very fully examined the subject; and am, to my inexpressible satisfaction, recovered out of the snare." And, no doubt, thousands much in the same way, being uninstructed, and unable to defend themselves, are shaken from their steadfastness, and become unsettled, wavering, filled with doubts and perplexities, hurtful to their progress in grace, and the peace of the church. Most of these, too, have been very well indoctrinated on religious subjects in general, but not on this.

And now, my brethren, does the greatness of this subject, its momentous consequences, the awful responsibilities connected with it, lie with suitable weight upon your minds? Do you feel that this is the established order of God's house? I trust you know the worth of souls: But do you feel the importance, of rearing up the sacred tabernacle, according to

the pattern shewed us in the holy mount ? In other words, of building the church of the living God, not only in faith and purity, but according to the pattern exhibited to us in the volume of revealed truth ? If this tabernacle, of which God himself hath given the pattern, is not so reared up, or builded, can we expect the glory of the Lord to rest upon it, and fill it ? My brethren, though you may have been very faithful on many subjects, have you not been quite *remiss* on this ? You, my brother, are a Pastor ; and certain persons whom you esteem, but who do not believe in infant baptism, frequently attend on your ministrations ; and if, to save their feelings, you defer to bring forward that instruction which is necessary for the establishing of the church in the faith and order of the gospel, is it right ? Fifty years ago it was not so. Ministers were careful to maintain a distinction between the children of the church and others. In their public ministrations, the most tender and feeling addresses were often made to baptized children, as well as to their parents, pointing out to them the relation which baptized children are in to God and to the church ; and also in their addresses to the Throne of Grace, such children were most feelingly, affectionately, and distinctly mentioned. And the consequences were undoubtedly happy and blessed.

Again suffer me to inquire, Have you in your private devotions, been importunate at the Throne of Grace, for the children of the church who have received the seal of God's covenant ? And have you brought them forward in your public prayers, that the church may with you lift her united cry, that God would pour his spirit on her seed, and his blessing on her offspring ? Was I not far advanced in life, standing on the threshold of eternity, expecting soon to render up my last account, I should not perhaps feel it my duty to press this subject so earnestly upon you. These are souls for whom Christ died ; they are the lambs of his flock, and must they not be gathered into his fold, that from the womb of the morning he may have the dew of his youth ?

The following are the remarks of President DWIGHT, in one of his excellent Sermons on this subject : “ It is not unusual for a minister of the gospel to devote twenty-four sermons in a year, to the consideration of the Lord's Supper—twelve delivered at what is styled, in this country, the Sacramental

Lecture, and twelve more on the several Sabbaths consecrated to the administration of this sacrament. On baptism, at the same time, ministers rarely preach. Perhaps it is no unreasonable supposition, that the subjects of this discourse are now for the first time, brought out in the desk, to the consideration of a great part of this audience. Why such a difference is made between *two institutions* of Christ, vested with the same authority, solemnity, and influence, I am unable to determine. But whatever may be the ground of this distinction, I am satisfied it cannot be a good one. There is but too much reason to believe, that not only the children, who have been baptized, but the parents also are in many instances lamentably ignorant of the nature of this institution, the truths which it declares, the duties which it involves, and the privileges which it confers. Were these things made more frequently the subject of preaching; were they clearly illustrated, and solemnly enforced, there is the best reason to believe it would become a far *richer* and more extensive  *blessing* to mankind."

These remarks are excellent, truly excellent; but, my brethren, a greater than President Dwight, has left it in solemn and awful charge to us all: "Feed my sheep, feed my *lambs*." Yes, feed them with the milk of the word, and the bread of God's house. If, then, you have been, and continue to be remiss in this duty, and any of these lambs of the flock of Christ, perish through your neglect, how will you answer it at the great day? Will not the blood of innocents be found in the skirts of your garments? But, my brethren, the field is before you, and may the Lord give you understanding.

II. The parents of baptized children will, in a few words, suffer me to expostulate with them. How great is the privilege, and how rich the blessing, that you and your households should be taken into covenant with the blessed God! That God should say to you, "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed!" Your duty, to give up your children to God in covenant, is unquestionably very clear, and your obligation to do so, is as clear. But, enjoying this high privilege, it also follows that you are under the highest possible obligation to live and act in conformity to it, and do every thing in your power, by your instructions, your prayers, and your examples, that



your children may be the subjects of God's special grace, and the heirs of his eternal kingdom and glory. Will you, can you, will any thing tempt you, to neglect the spiritual and eternal welfare of your dear offspring, the fruit of your own bodies? You love your children; it is right you should: But let your love be directed by wisdom. How much do you do for your children, that they may appear to advantage in this world? If they are sick, how anxious are you for their recovery! To afford them relief you will readily incur much expense, and do every thing in your power. And why neglect any thing which will be to their spiritual advantage? How thankful ought you to be that your children may be taken or admitted into covenant with God! That God is not only a covenant-keeping God to you, but to your children also! "I will," says he, "be a God to thee, and to thy seed." O, the wonderful, the matchless, the condescending grace of God, to take us, and our children, into such a near relation with himself! We are but worms: He is the God of glory! What privilege can be so great?

Much of the comfort and blessedness of being parents, and of having children is, that we may have the unspeakable gratification of again giving them up to God, according to his own appointment, not only a seed, to be accounted unto us, but unto the Lord for a generation. Psalm 22, 30. Not only to honor us, and bear up our name, but to honor God and bear his name, and his praise in the world. Hannah had long been childless, and it was her grief. At length, God gave her a son, a Samuel. She rejoiced at his birth, but much more when she brought him to the tabernacle, and devoted him to the Lord. Then it was that she said, "1st Sam. 2, 1: "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, mine horn is exalted in the Lord, my mouth is enlarged, because I rejoice in thy salvation."

The christian parent's pious meditation may be this: And may I bring my child into covenant with the great God, and seal it with the righteousness of my faith! O, indulgent Heaven! O, gracious Saviour! May I bring my child to thee, thou suffering lamb of God! Dost thou grant me this privilege? O, what consolation, that I have a child, which may, from its infancy, be admitted into the bosom of the church, and into the arms of my Redeemer! Let me

go to the house of God, and there form my vows. Let me bring my child, and there present him to the Lord, and there say, This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of Heaven, the gate of the Lord, into which the righteous enter. Here are the shepherd's tents. Here are the footsteps of the flock, whither in all ages they have gone up.

Is my child baptized? O, what shall I render unto the Lord, for the seal of his covenant to *me* and *mine*? To *me* and *mine* are sealed exceeding great and precious promises. O, let me serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. As a parent, may I be faithful to use and improve the christian ordinance of baptism, to testify the overflowings of a grateful heart, in humble obedience towards God, and ardent desires that his name may be glorified, and my child blessed. Let me consider this duty, as a *benefit* conferred on me, and not as a *debt*, which I have discharged. Merciful Saviour! with humble confidence in thy superabounding grace, permit me to come and make my supplication to thee, in behalf of my child, which thou hast graciously given me. May I come to thee, with the same faith as the woman of Canaan, Mat. 15th chap., when she besought thee for her daughter, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my child is grievously vexed with a devil." Yes, Lord, *this* child, *that* child, is a child of wrath, under the pollution and guilt of sin. Help, Lord, help me. O Jesus, let not my child perish. I cannot doubt thy power; nor while thy sacred *promise* stands *uncancelled* and unaltered, I cannot doubt thy willingness, to save unto the uttermost, all that come unto thee. O, compassionate Saviour, I bring my children unto thee, who hast said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." O, take them into the arms of thy mercy. Thine they were, thou gavest them to me, and I have consecrated them to thee. Thou hast permitted me to bring them into thy visible kingdom. O, make them the subjects of thy saving grace, and the heirs and inheritors of thine everlasting kingdom and glory.

Christian parents, as your children, whom you dearly love, have received baptism, the *sign* of regeneration, and seal of the covenant of grace, labor to your utmost, that they may have *that* which the sign signifies.

Having the covenant promise of God, and having the seal and token of his good will to our infant seed, we have a sufficient handle for our faith, in offering up our earnest prayers for them. But how can those parents, with equal confidence, pray for their children, who deny them an interest in the covenant, and set them down on even ground with the children of infidels? We demand then, Is any prayer acceptable to God, but the prayer of faith? And can any *blessing* be prayed for, in faith, but what is promised? To have a promise, is to have a covenant grant: Therefore, no one can consistently pray for his children the prayer of faith, any further than he allows them an interest in the gospel covenant. But you, christian parents, can, if you *have faith*, pray for your children the *prayer* of faith. You have a promise, an exhibition of blessings, sealed to you. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal; the Lord knoweth them that are *his*." Having this seal, confirmation or security, that God discerns *his people* from others, will be near to them, and will perform for them his promised mercy, you, therefore, may "come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Carry then your dear offspring to the throne of grace: God has made you the instruments of their present existence; and, through you, (dreadful to speak!) they are defiled with sin, and are, as well as others, the children of wrath. Will you not, then, strive to obtain for them, the remission of their sins? Can *you* rest easy, while the wrath of God abides on *them*? You will then, most earnestly, implore the divine mercy, that God, by his spirit, will change their hearts; that he will give them repentance, faith, and justification. You have no excuse to plead, no reason to offer why you should neglect your duty, but every possible encouragement faithfully to perform it. And to whom do the promises of conversion belong? To those children, within the church, or to those out of it? To those within, as we have seen, most certainly. Psalm 87, 4: "Of Zion, it shall be said, This and that man was born in her." What encouragement to be faithful in prayer!

2dly. To your prayers, God requires you to add your instructions. How strict was God in commanding his former covenant people, on this head. Deut. 6, 6: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart,



and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them, as a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets, between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." Teach them all moral and christian duties. Lead their young and tender minds, to a correct view of the divine character, and of God's righteous law ; of his abhorrence of sin ; his indignation against the sinner, and just determination to punish him. Teach them to fear God, and regard his holy institutions. Lead them to the fountain of mercy. Impress their minds with a just sense of the infinite love, the amazing condescension, and dreadful sufferings of the Son of God on the cross. Shew them the loveliness of his character, the bright examples of virtue which he exhibited in his life, as well as his bitter agonies, when, on Calvary, he yielded up the Ghost, and said, "It is finished." Convince them of the worth of their own souls, of the nature and necessity of repentance, of faith in the Son of God, and of a change of their hearts, in conformity to the divine will : And, that their whole lives, as well as yours, must pass the scrutiny of a judgment day. Set before them, and persuade them of the awful realities of eternity, the blessedness of heaven, and the miseries of hell.

3dly. To your instructions, you must add government.—Keep them in the good way, and restrain them from evil. By the laws of natural society, and of his revealed will, God has constituted you their guardians. You are responsible for their conduct, and are required to restrain them. Of Eli, God said, "I will judge his house, because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." Watch over your tender offspring, as well as plead for them ; and, whenever you administer correction, do it with parental affection, with tenderness, and in such a manner that they shall be persuaded that you do it, not to gratify any hard feelings of your own, but solely for their good.

4thly. Your example will have a more powerful effect upon them, than even your instruction, or your parental authority. Let them know that you love piety, that you love the bible, the family altar, the house of God, and all christian du-

ties. Let them be convinced that *you* esteem religion a precious treasure. Their attention will then be attracted. They will seek it, and will be engaged to obtain it. How solemn is the consideration, that you, and your children, must one day appear at the judgment seat of Christ, to answer for your faithful performance of the trust, now committed to your charge. This, without doubt, will be a happy meeting if you do your duty now, but painful beyond expression if you neglect it.

III. Children, who have received baptism, are now invited to listen to a few words of instruction to them.

Little children, lambs of the flock of Christ, and all young people who have received baptism, how sensible and how thankful should you be, for the numerous blessings which have been poured upon you, and for all the happy circumstances, with which you are surrounded? You are not placed in a land of darkness, of heathens, pagans, and idolaters; not in a land destitute of science, and filled with the grossest superstition. But you have been born, and thus far educated in the bosom of the church: And how precious are your immortal souls? The sun, in its glory, shines not so bright as souls redeemed by the blood of Christ. How wonderful it is, that you should be born of christian parents, and that you should have the seal of God's covenant set upon you? Benefits and blessings unspeakable, and unnumbered, are now held out to you for your acceptance. The ever blessed God offers himself. He is a God, not only to parents, but to their seed. To christian parents, he says: "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed." Gracious promise, indeed! And, with himself, will he not freely give you all things? What can you have more? The great end for which you were created was, that you may be forever happy and blessed in the enjoyment of God. But you are sinful, polluted worms of the dust. You have a sinful nature, and sin is highly displeasing to God. "But God gave his son Jesus Christ, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Again: Having been brought into the covenant of salvation by baptism, and having been by faith, and prayer, solemnly consecrated, and devoted, you will consider, that you also are under an increased obligation to consecrate, and de-

vote yourselves to God that your lives may correspond with the covenant vows of your pious parents. Some people may tell you that you were not capable of understanding the nature of the covenant transaction, neither were you, yourselves consenting to it, and therefore, the obligation cannot be binding upon you. Remember, dear youth, that this is the most downright delusion. Heed them not. Your obligation is as strong as if you did, in the clearest manner, understand it, and in the fullest manner consent to it ; and for this reason, the institution is God's. It is his own. It is God who required your parents to do what they have done, and he has laid the obligation upon you, and who can dispute his right ? Neither is it necessary, in other matters, that children should understand all the requirements of their parents, as to their nature and extent, in order to make them binding. Must children, for instance, yield their previous consent to the commands of their parents, before it becomes their duty to obey their parents ? By no means. Your obligation to obey your parents, arises *not* from *their* command and will, but from the command and will of God. And further, God's requirements are all of them *good*, and it is for your *good* that you should be under obligation to fear him, and keep his commandments, one of which is, that in all things lawful, you obey your parents. Yes, dear youth, you are under such obligation, that by means of it, if you yield to temptation and disobey God, your sins will be the more exceedingly aggravated. Others may tell you, that what has been done for you in your infancy is only priestcraft, tradition, baby baptism, and of no avail. I say again, heed them not, they are mockers of God, and would lead you astray. Let then your baptismal obligation, be a powerful restraint upon you, to keep you from sin. "If sinners entice thee consent thou not." If you are tempted to profaneness, to lying, theft, slander, Sabbath breaking, or any other transgression of God's law, say within yourselves each one within himself, I am a baptized person, the sacred name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, has been called upon me, and how can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God ?

Again : Your obligation arising from your baptism should prompt you to more faithfulness, and diligent perseverance in all commanded duties. You should be more dutiful to



your parents, more gentle, more affable, more tender-hearted, easy, and innocent, in all your behaviour. Let each one say within himself, I am a baptized person, therefore let my behaviour be acceptable to all people. Shew your respect, and firm attachment to the sacred scriptures, God's holy word, his holy Sabbaths, and all his other institutions. The bible is the best book in the world ; it is the book of life, the book of God.

Again : Being baptized you are under the strongest obligations to seek and labor after that which baptism represents, viz : internal sanctification, the baptism of the spirit. Remember that this world is not your final home. Whether you will live, through childhood, and youth, is very uncertain. Your great business, in this world, is to prepare for another, to obtain the forgiveness of your sins, an interest in the merits of Christ, and an adoption into the number of God's family. And in order to this, you must repent and believe on the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners. But whether it is the pleasure of God that you should have an early death, or that you should live long in the world, the sooner you have experimental religion, the more enjoyment you will have, and the more good you may do, and the better you may be prepared for the world to come.

Again : Having received christian baptism, you should labor after the highest attainments, both of doctrinal, and of practical piety. Say each one with himself, I am a baptized person, and I should as much as possible, strive to imitate the followers of the Lamb. Let me look to the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, and the martyrs. They were once children as well as I. Let me imitate the bright examples, which they have set before me. Let the same ardor, the same pure, benevolent, and holy spirit, which animated them, burn in my breast, that I may honor my parents, and honor my Saviour, and as I increase in stature, increase also in wisdom, and in favor with God and with man. And may you have the same consolation, as they had, in doing good in the world, of dying in peace, and of being made forever happy in the kingdom of God above.

*Finally :* You will permit me to leave with you, one or two considerations more. And *first :* Let your minds be deeply impressed, with a sense of the infinite *Love* of Christ, towards

little children. "Suffer the little children, said he, and forbid them not, to come unto me." He then took them in his arms and blessed them. Have you not a desire to receive blessing from Christ? He alone can make you wise. He alone can make you truly happy. The other consideration is the *conduct* of little children towards Christ. Mat. 21, 15: The children in the temple cried, Hosanna to the Son of David. What an example is here set by children! Have you not a desire to imitate them? Will you not do as they did? The priests and scribes were offended, but Jesus was pleased. He took notice of their conduct, and was highly delighted. May God give you wisdom to do as they did, that you may receive from the Saviour, the approbation which they received, and live and reign with Christ, in his kingdom and glory, world without end. Amen.

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From the Missionary Magazine.

**A HYMN.—INFANT DEDICATION.**

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Psalm 147, 3. Little babe! I now receive thee,  
 Prov. 20, 7. From thy Maker's bounteous hand;  
 With his precious grace, I leave thee,  
 May'st thou in his favor stand.

Weak and helpless, young and tender,  
 Gen. 33, 13. Thou'rt committed to my care;  
 1 Chron. 22, 5. While my thanks to God I render,  
 Thou a parent's love shall share.

Psalm 51, 5. Born in sin, in sin conceived,  
 1st Pet. 1, 2. Satan would destroy thy soul;  
 But by this my fear 's relieved,  
 Grace can Satan's wiles control.

Psalm 110, 3. God's free spirit in a twinkling,  
 Heb. 12, 24. Can display resistless power;

1st Pet. 1, 2. Can apply the blood of sprinkling,  
And thy ruin'd state restore.

                                  Thee a gracious God has lent me,  
Luke 2, 22.       For thy precious soul I feel,  
Rom. 4, 11.       Back to God I now present thee,  
                                  To receive an holy seal.

                                  This shall seal the covenant to me,  
Gen. 17, 7, 10.   In which God has thus agreed :  
                                  "I will be a God, both to thee,  
                                  And a God unto thy seed."

Gen. 17, 1.       Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
                                  18, 19.       If I truly faithful be,  
                                  22, 17.       Stand engaged through Jesus' merit,  
                                  To bestow free grace on thee.

Gen. 26, 4, 5. Blessed covenant, what extension !  
Rom. 5, 20.       Grace abounding over sin ;  
                                  O, the glorious condescension,  
Mark 10, 14.     Thus to take our infants in.

Acts 16, 15, 33. Still no cause we find to sever,  
                                  Parents from their children dear,  
Psalm 37, 26.   Both united still together,  
                                  In the gracious promise share.

Gen. 17, 11.     Of God's covenant as the token,  
                                  7.       Abra'm's sons were circumcised,  
                                  14.       If the covenant be not broken,  
                                  Infants now may be baptized.

                                  'Twas the olive once did nourish,  
Rom. 11, 16, 25.   Jews rejected now for sin,  
                                  On the same, the Gentiles flourish,  
                                  Now through faith ingrafted in.

                                  If believers for their offspring,  
Luke 18, 15.     *Then* had heavenly blessings sealed ;  
                                  16.       Thus believers are in nothing,  
                                  From such blessings *now* withheld.



- Rom. 11, 19. Jews the olive's sap and sweetness,  
                   Did enjoy for Jesus' sake,  
                   Of its precious root and fatness,  
                   Holy Gentiles still partake.
- 1st Cor. 7, 14. Children still are holy named,  
                   From the parent who believes ;  
                   Surely, then, we must be blamed,
- Mat. 19, 14.     If we slight when Christ receives.
- Gen. 17, 14.     Hearing what the word has told me,  
 Acts 2, 39.       Precious babe a call I find ;
- Rom. 11, 17. In the arms of faith to hold thee,  
                   To receive the seal design'd.
- Eph. 6, 4.       O, for grace to make me careful,  
                   All my duty to discharge,
- Psalms 110, 32. Humble I shall be, and prayerful,  
                   If the Lord my heart enlarge.
- Deut. 6, 7.      Daily I would be instilling,  
                   5, 29.       Heavenly truths into thy mind,
- Eccl. 11, 6.     If a gracious God be willing,  
                   These thy heart at length shall find.
- Prov. 19, 18.   Sharp corrections, if required,  
                   22, 15.     For thy failings thou must feel,  
                   23, 13, 14. To promote the end desired,  
                   29, 17.     And preserve thy soul from hell.
- Eph. 2, 8, 9.   Still with God's free grace I leave thee,  
                   When my duty all is done,  
                   His free grace alone must save thee,  
                   For the sake of Christ, his Son.

**SHORT FORMS OF PRAYER,**  
TO GUIDE A PIOUS MOTHER IN PRAYING  
FOR HER CHILDREN.

O, thou divine and exalted majesty of Heaven and earth, help thy poor, unworthy creature, to come to the throne of grace, in behalf both of myself and my children. Thou hast, in thy tender mercy, been pleased to bless me with children, the pledges of thy love ; and, of thy rich grace, hast enabled me to give them up unto thee, in the covenant of thy love, and seal them with the righteousness of my faith. I did it, as I believed, sincerely serving thee, and rejoicing with fear and with trembling. And now, O my heavenly father, I beseech thee to give me grace, that I may train them up in the way they should go, and bring them up in the fear, the nurture, and admonition of the Lord. I do most earnestly beseech thee, to give me, at all times, the spirit of prayer, that I may bring them to the throne of grace, that I may obtain help for them, in every time of need. They are dear unto me, but they are yet children of wrath, even as others. Grant me wisdom and understanding, that I may teach them the pure doctrines of our holy religion. Help me to set before them, examples of piety, of virtue, and of pure obedience to thy holy will. O God, be entreated to give them the restraining influences of thy spirit. Keep them from the snares of temptation. Suffer them not to follow evil examples. Keep their hands from mischief, their lips from speaking guile, and their feet from the paths of sin. O, keep them from error and delusion, and incline their hearts to give heed unto thy word. O, grant them the regenerating influences of thy spirit, that their hearts may be changed from a state of nature to a state of grace. As they have been dedicated to thee in baptism, and born of the water, so I do most earnestly beseech thee, that they may be born of the spirit, and be made heirs of thine eternal kingdom and glory. O, thou merciful God, I do plead thy gracious promise, that thou wilt be a God, to me and mine, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

## ANOTHER, UNDER SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES.

O, thou compassionate Saviour, who didst take little children in thine arms and bless them, I bring to thee these dear pledges of thy love, that for them I may obtain thy blessing. I ask not for them long life, nor riches, nor honors ; but O, thou divine Emanuel, thou suffering Saviour, thou bleeding Lamb of God, O grant them the influences of thy spirit. May their hearts be sprinkled with thy blood ; may they be the subjects of thy saving grace ; and all the praise shall be to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, both now and forever more. Amen.

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## FOR A CHILD GONE TO SEA, OR INTO THE ARMY.

Most righteous and holy God, my covenant God, who hast directed us at all times to come unto thee, by prayer and supplication, and in all things by prayer and supplication to let our wants and requests be made known unto thee. Suffer me, poor, needy, helpless, contrite, and unworthy as I am, to come unto thee in behalf of my son, [who has gone to sea, to do business on the great and mighty waters. O, my God, he has gone from me, but he has not gone from thee ; for thou art an ever present God, and doest thy pleasure in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deep places. Thou canst restrain the violence of the winds, and the raging of the waves.] O, thou preserver of men, preserve his life, I beseech thee, from mortal sickness, and from distressing and fatal accidents. O, follow him by thy good spirit, wherever he goes, and save him from the snares and temptations of vice and sin. O, let him never forget the instructions which he has received when at home. O, my heavenly Father, thou hast, of thine own free will, made the blessed covenant promise, that thou wilt be a God both to me and mine. With earnestness I plead it. With cheerfulness, with confidence, and with humble hope, I rely upon it. In the sincerity of my heart, I gave, I dedicated him to thee. He is thine by creation : he is thine by preservation. And now, O thou covenant keeping God, make him thine by regeneration, sanctification, and adoption into the number of thy redeemed family ; that wherever he is, or wherever he goes, he may feel



the restraints, and be a witness for the truth of our holy religion ; which favors grant, O thou merciful God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

The foregoing may be suitable for one gone into the army, by omitting the words included in brackets in the preceding prayer, and using the following : Who, in thy providence, has been called into the army. But thou, Lord, dost preside over armies, and order all circumstances respecting them. A bow may be drawn at a venture, but thou, Lord, dost direct the arrow. Thou canst give it direction to be fatal : Or, thou canst cover the head of him that is in danger, in the day of battle. O, spare and preserve the life of my son. Cover thou his head, when the arrows or weapons of death may fly thick and fast about him.

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#### FOR THE USE OF A BAPTIZED CHILD.

Almighty God, my maker, my preserver, my heavenly Father, though it is but a little while since I began to live, yet I understand that I am created and made for eternity ; that this life, which I have now begun, is never to end. The thought is noble, it is sublime, it is solemn, it is dreadful. May a suitable sense of it be impressed upon my mind. O, help me to live in conformity to it. I give thee thanks that I have been born in a land of christian light and knowledge, and that I am descended from christian parents, who in my infancy devoted and dedicated me to thee, in thy covenant, by baptism, under that gracious promise of thine : I will be a God to thee and to thy seed. As I have received the outward baptism, the washing of water, the sign of regeneration, O grant that I may be baptized of the spirit, as I have been born of the water ; may I be born of the spirit ; may my heart be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ, that my sinful nature may be taken away, and that new, and pure, and holy affections may be implanted in my soul, and have a governing influence upon all my conduct. Help me to feel a just and proper sense of the blessings exhibited to me, and of the obligations conferred upon me. May thy fear be always before mine eyes, and may I have wisdom to make a right improvement of all the blessings which I now enjoy.

And as I am thine by creation, by preservation, and by sacred rites and covenant obligations, may I be thine by regeneration, sanctification and adoption, into the number of thy redeemed family. Help me to devote and consecrate my whole life to thee. O, my heavenly Father, give me just views of thy character, and the character of Jesus Christ, my Saviour. Grant me wisdom to discover the ways of sin, and grace to resist all temptation, and all the snares of the adversary of my soul. And may I not only discover the ways of sin and avoid them, but may I have wisdom to discover the ways of virtue, peace, truth, and holiness, and grace, to walk in them. Help me to perform my duty to my parents, to honor them by a kind and becoming behaviour, and in a cheerful obedience to their commands; in receiving their instructions, and in imitating their good and pious examples. And may I have wisdom to conduct myself with propriety towards all people, giving honor and respect to whom honor and respect are due, and giving offence to none. And O, my heavenly Father, grant, I beseech thee, that I may be an instrument of thy praise, in the land of the living, and finally be accepted of thee, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

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#### PRAYER FOR A CHILD DANGEROUSLY SICK.

Almighty God and Father, who didst give thy Son, to come into our world to save sinners, and who hast graciously said, Call upon me, in a day of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. It is now with thine handmaid, a day of trouble, a time of need. My child is dangerously sick, and where shall I go but unto thee? I know that all diseases are thy servants; they come at thy call, and go at thy bidding. If thou speak the healing word, my child shall be restored. O, remember thy gracious covenant promise, that thou wilt be a God to me and mine. Bless the means used, and spare the life of the child, I do beseech thee. Let not this sickness be unto death, but unto the glory of thy great name. But above all I do, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, beseech thee to prepare both me and my sick child, for thy sovereign will and pleasure. O, remember thy great covenant promise, that thou wilt be a God to me and mine, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

## THE AUTHOR'S PRAYER.

O, thou most merciful God and Saviour Jesus Christ ; thou infinite source of wisdom, goodness, mercy, grace and truth ; O, thou prayer-hearing God, who hast taught us always to look unto thee for direction and guidance in all things ; thou hast, as thine unworthy servant believes, put it into his heart, and enabled him to compose and publish this little book. And now, O God, his heart's desire and humble supplication is, that it may be accompanied and followed with thy blessing. Be entreated to remove all prejudice from the minds of all those who may read it. Give them a spirit of candour and diligent enquiry after truth and duty. May all parents and heads of families, suitably consider thy most gracious covenant promise, made especially to families, that thou dost freely engage to be their God, and the God of their seed. May they have clear views and correct understanding that this promise is established on the everlasting, unchangeable, unfailing faithfulness of God himself. O, remember the rising generation. O, that thou wilt be their God, that thou wilt circumcise their hearts, to love the Lord their God, with all their hearts, that they may live. Pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. And, according to thy blessed promise, pour thy spirit on the seed of the church, and thy blessing on her offspring ; that they shall spring up as among the grass, and as willows by the water courses ; that one shall say, I am the Lord's ; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob ; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel ; and that from the womb of the morning, Christ may have the dew of his youth. And now, O God, be entreated to hear, and answer, and save, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

But, thy compassions, Lord,  
To endless years endure,  
And, children's children, ever find,  
Thy words of *promise* sure.—DR. WATTS.



From a Pamphlet entitled, a "Historical Sketch of the Towns of Westfield and Southwick, published by EMERSON DAVIS, A. M. Preceptor of Westfield Academy, in 1826, we extract the following :—

"Rev. ISAAC CLINTON, graduated at Yale College in 1786, and was ordained Pastor of the Church in Southwick, January, 1788. He published a treatise on Infant Baptism, which went through two editions. The first was published in a pamphlet, the second in a duodecimo volume and bound.—It is a work of merit."

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The work, as formerly published at Springfield, Mass., was, without the solicitation or knowledge of the author, reviewed by the Editors of the PANOPLIST, at Boston. From their review, the following is extracted :—

"The author has treated his subject with great candor, perspicuity and judgment. He adduces evidences of the *fact* that *Infants* were baptized by the Apostles. These evidences are stated in a clear, and applied in a forcible manner.—He has brought up to view some arguments which we have never seen in other writers on the subject. And by his critical and judicial remarks, he has cast new light on several passages of scripture. We recommend his Treatise to the attentive perusal of those who wish for information on a subject so much controverted at the present day."

## ERRATA.

Page 12, line 16, from top, after *Adam*, for *period*, substitute a *comma*,  
and let the sentence close with the word *world*.

- " 29, " 10, from bottom, for *Christ's*, read *Christ*.
- " 30, " 10, from top, for *in*, read *is*.
- " 64, " 11, from bottom, for *dispensations*, read *dispensation*.
- " 65, " 10, from top, for *prove*, read *proves*.
- " 65, " 6, from bottom, for *husbandman*, read *husbandmen*.
- " 94, " 22, from top, for *parents*, read *parent*.
- " 101, " 2, from bottom, for *unholy*, read *holy*.
- " 149, " 9, from bottom, after *body*, add *of sin*.
- " 157, " 10, from bottom, for *extalled*, read *extolled*.
- " 159, " 9, from bottom, for *was shed*, read *washed*.
- " 168, " 2, from bottom, for *swear*, read *sware*.
- " 171, " 15, from bottom, for *the*, read *a*.
- " 186, " 1, on top, for *form*, read *perform*.
- " 192, " 7, from bottom, for *parerts*, read *parents*.
- " 200, " 4, from bottom, for *judicial*, read *judicious*.









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